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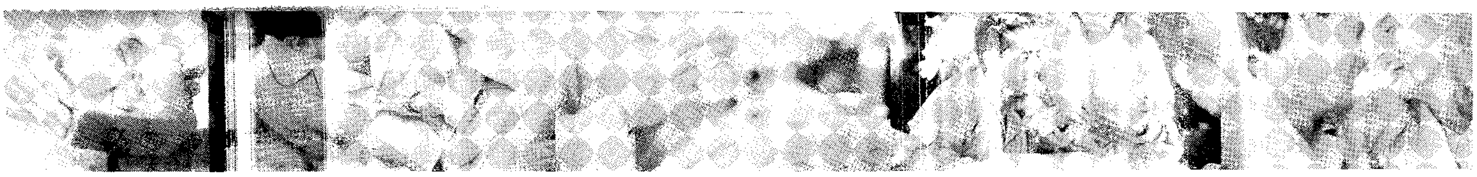

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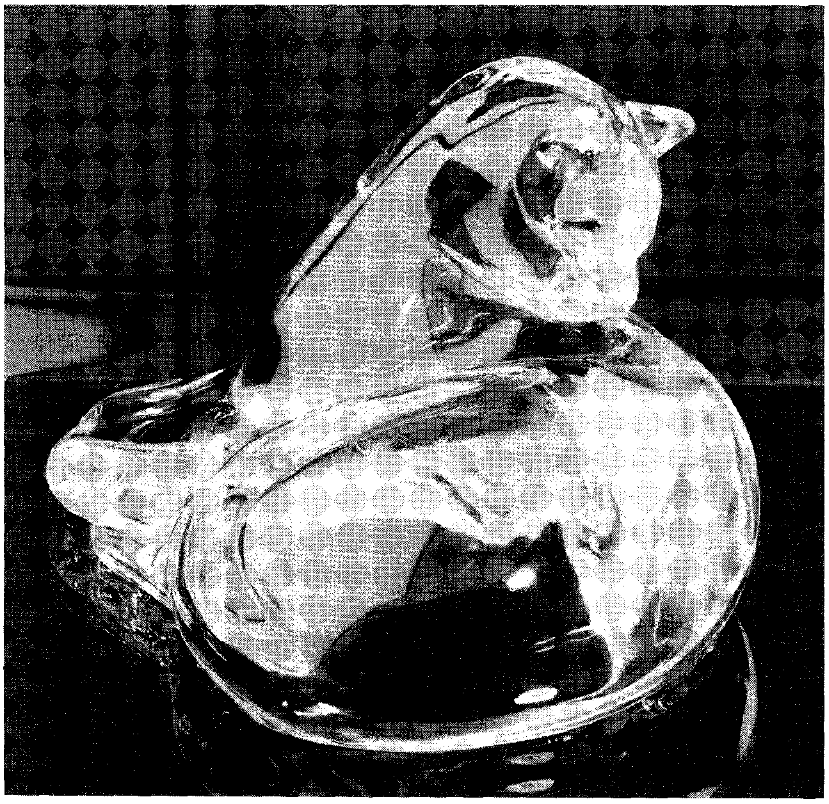

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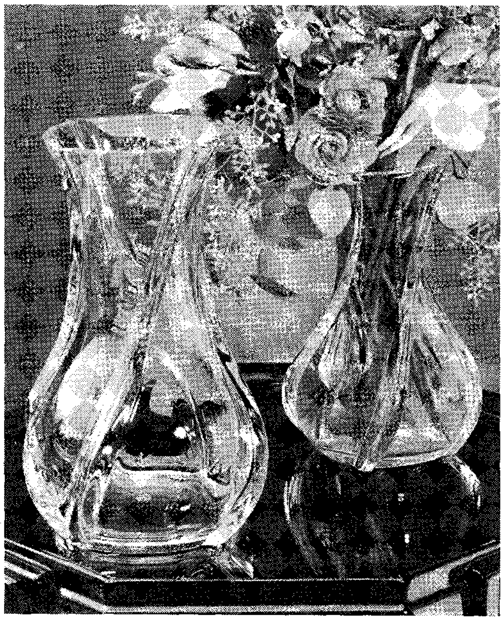

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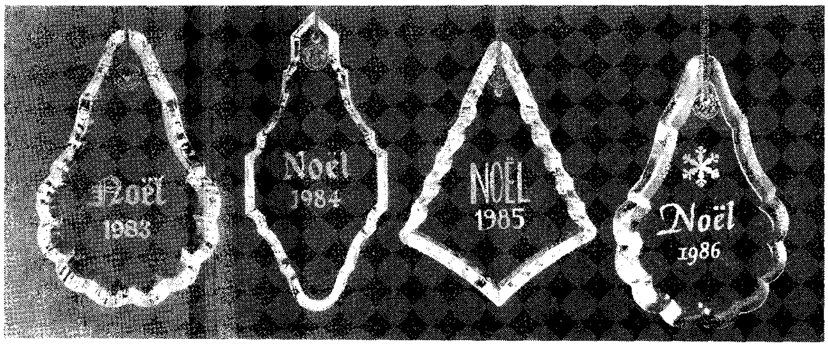

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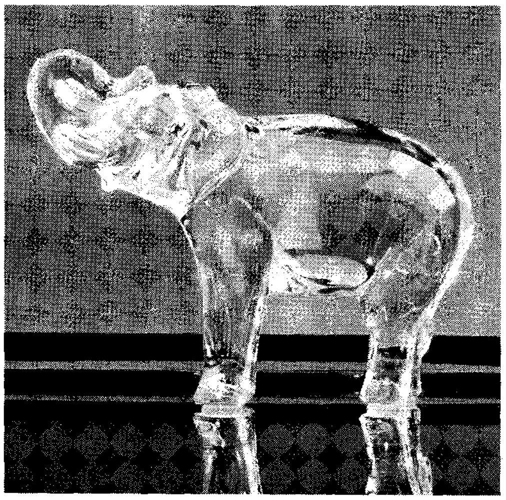

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

A CONSCIENTIOUS CALENDAR OF EVENTS OF INTEREST

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THE THEATRE

PLAYS AND MUSICALS

An Acute Obsession—A play by Barbara Feldman and Eric Rosse. (Harold Clurman, 412 W. 42nd St. 594-2370. Wednesday through Saturday at 8, and Sunday at 7. Matinées Saturday at 2 and Sunday at 3. Closes Sunday, Nov. 16.)

Alterations—There is more fun than one might expect in Leigh Curran's play about domestic tension, much of it contributed by the actors, under Austin Pendleton's direction. They are Gretchen Cryer, Cynthia Nixon, Wayne Tippit, Jane Hoffman, and Mary Kane. (Reviewed in our issue of 11/3/86.) (WPA Theatre, 519 W. 23rd St. 206-0523. Wednesday through Friday at 8; Saturday at 6 and 9; and Sunday at 7. Matinée Sunday at 3. Closes Sunday, Nov. 16.)

Angry Housewives—A boring musical about four dissatisfied women who form a rock group. The closing number is funny, but there's a long, long wait. (9/29/86) (Minetta Lane, 18-22 Minetta Lane, east of Sixth Ave., between W. 3rd and Bleecker Sts. 420-8000. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

Arsenic and Old Lace—Jean Stapleton, Polly Holliday, and Tony Roberts are the leading actors in this farce by Joseph Kesselring, which was a big hit back in 1941. It is still pretty funny, and suitable for an idle evening. (7/7/86) (46th Street Theatre, 226 W. 46th St. 221-1211. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Brownstone—A revival of a little musical about a New York brownstone and its tenants. The music, by Peter Larson and Josh Rubins, is pleasant, and it is well sung, but the words—lyrics and book—don't come to much. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Roundabout, 100 E. 17th St. 420-1883. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays, Saturdays, and Sundays at 2.)

Circle Repertory Company—Presenting two plays in rotating repertory—**in this fallen city:** Bryan Williams' mystery, set in East Harlem, is not as gripping as it should be, in spite of excellent performances by Michael Higgins and Danton Stone. Closes Friday, Nov. 14. (10/6/86) . . . **the early girl:** By Caroline Kava. Closes Sunday, Nov. 30. (Circle Repertory Company Theatre, 99 Seventh Ave. S. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Saturdays at 2 and Sundays at 3. For information about play scheduling, call 924-7100.)

The Colored Museum—A sharp, satiric revue on the subject of blackness and related matters, which is almost done in by damnable sound amplification. George C. Wolfe was the clever writer, and L. Kenneth Richardson the able director. The performers, all of them splendid, are Loretta Devine, Tommy Hollis, Reggie Montgomery, Vickilyn Reynolds, and Danitra Vance. (11/10/86) (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150. Nightly, except Mondays, at 8. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3.)

The Common Pursuit—An English import. Six Cambridge undergraduates, in the sixties, plan to launch a literary magazine in accordance with the rigorous standards of the critic F. R. Leavis, and in the ensuing twenty years manage to breach these standards. Simon Gray's play, while not especially original, is consistently entertaining, and it is very well performed, under the direction of the dramatist and Michael McGuire. With Kristoffer Tabori and Dylan Baker, among others. (11/3/86) (Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 580-1313. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3.)

Double Image Theatre—Presenting **the dreamer examines his pillow:** John Patrick Shanley's comedy—sometimes strong and funny, sometimes tedious—is composed of three conversations, between (1) a young woman and her former lover, (2) the young woman and her father, and (3) the father and the lover, all of them citizens of the Bronx. (10/20/86) (304 W. 47th St. 265-0794. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8, and Saturdays at 7 and 10. Matinées Sundays at 3. Closes Sunday, Nov. 23.)

Equity Library Theatre—A revival of the 1954 musical **the pajama game** is the second in this season's series of eight productions. The book is by George Abbott and Richard Bissell, and the score and lyrics by Richard Adler and Jerry Ross. (Equity Library Theatre, 103rd St. and Riverside Dr. Nightly, except Mondays, at 8. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 2:30. Closes Sunday, Nov. 23. For information about tickets, for which contributions are requested, call 663-2028.)

Groucho: A Life in Revue—A surprisingly lively and touching show about the great comedian/humorist. Frank Ferrante's dedicated impersonation becomes a true performance; Les Marsden, doubling, comes close to Chico and seems inspired as Harpo; and Faith Prince deftly acts the women in their lives, among them, of course, Margaret Dumont. Arthur Marx (son of Groucho) and Robert Fisher were the playwrights; Mr. Marx directed. (10/20/86) (Lucille Lortel, 121 Christopher St. 924-8782. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

Have I Got a Girl for You!—A ham-fisted musical takeoff on "Frankenstein" and other horror movies of the thirties and forties. For camp followers only. (Second Avenue Theatre, 189 Second Ave., at 12th St. 674-1460. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

Highest Standard of Living—A comedy by Keith Reddin. Preview Wednesday, Nov. 12. Opens officially on Thursday, Nov. 13. (Playwrights Horizons, 416 W. 42nd St. 279-4200. Tuesdays through Fridays, and Saturday, Nov. 15, at 8; Saturday, Nov. 22, at 7 and 10; and

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

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The House of Blue Leaves—A superb revival of John Guare's brilliant, ferocious comedy, with Swoosie Kurtz and John Mahoney, among other fine performers. Jerry Zaks was the acute, perceptive director. (3/31/86) (Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Krapp's Last Tape—A disappointing revival of Samuel Beckett's play. (9/15/86) (Actors Playhouse, 100 Seventh Ave. S. 691-6226. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 8 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

Lady Day at Emerson's Bar & Grill—A play of sorts about one of Billie Holiday's last engagements, at a night club in Philadelphia, well sung and performed by the personable Lonette McKee, who bears no resemblance—vocal, physical, or temperamental—to the late Miss Holiday. (9/29/86) (Westside Arts, 407 W. 43rd St. 541-8394. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

Lambs Theatre Company—A play by David McFadzean, **THE CHINA FISH,** *is the first in this season's* series of three productions. (Little Theatre at the Lambs, 130 W. 44th St. 997-1780. Wednesday and Saturday at 2 and 8; Thursday at 11 A.M. and 8; and Friday at 8. Closes Saturday, Nov. 15.)

A Little Like Magic—A production by the Famous People Players, a company of puppeteers from Canada. (Lyceum, 149 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 2 and 5.)

Me and My Girl—An infelicitously rehabilitated British musical out of the thirties, with a superb performance by Robert Lindsay in the starring rôle. (8/25/86) (Marquis, Broadway at 45th St. 947-0033. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

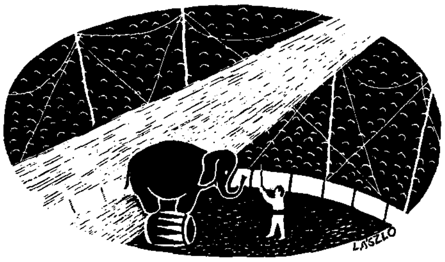
Negro Ensemble Company—Leslie Lee's **THE WAR PARTY,** the company's opening bill, is overloaded with plot, subplot, and incidents, but it is never tedious. Most of the action takes place in the offices of a black activist group in a Philadelphia slum. Among the good actors are Vondie Curtis-Hall, Adam Wade, Carla Brothers, and Kathryn Hunter. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Theatre Four, 424 W. 55th St. 246-8545. Wednesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 8:30; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 3, and Sundays at 2:30.)

Oh Coward!—*A revival of a musical revue* devised by Roderick Cook and first presented Off Broadway in 1972. The Coward in the show's title is Sir Noël, and the music and lyrics are his. With Mr. Cook, who also directed, Catherine Cox, and Patrick Quinn. Previews through Saturday, Nov. 15. Opens officially on Monday, Nov. 17. (Helen Hayes, 240 W. 44th St. 944-9450. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8; opening-night curtain at 6:45. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

Olympus on My Mind—A larky little musical based on the Amphitryon legend. Music by Grant Sturiale and words (book and lyrics) by Barry Harman, who also directed. (8/18/86) (Lambs, 130 W. 44th St. 997-1780. Nightly, *except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays* and Saturdays at 2.)

Social Security—With his first Broadway comedy, Andrew Bergman proves a worthy successor to the Neil Simon of "Barefoot in the Park." The fine cast includes Marlo Thomas, Ron Silver, and Stefan Schnabel. (4/28/86) (Ethel Barrymore, 243 W. 47th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Stardust—A revue featuring songs by lyricist Mitchell Parish and his many collaborators, including Hoagy Carmichael, Duke Ellington, and Glenn Miller. Conceived and directed by Albert Harris. (Theatre Off Park, 224 Waverly Pl., at 11th St. 627-2556. Wednesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.)



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Sweet Charity—A musical that, with very little alteration, has mysteriously improved with age. Directed and choreographed by Bob Fosse, it has a book by Neil Simon, songs by Cy Coleman and Dorothy Fields, and settings by Robert Randolph. Ann Reinking is the star. (5/12/86) (Minskoff, 45th St. west of Broadway. 869-0550. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

York Theatre Company—Final performances of Alan Ayckbourn's farce **TAKING STEPS.** (York Theatre, 2 E. 90th St. 534-5366. Friday, Nov. 14, at 8; Saturday, Nov. 15, at 3 and 8; and Sunday, Nov. 16, at 3.)

You Never Can Tell—A revival of an early Shaw comedy, which Shaw pretended to despise. Worth seeing for the performances of Victor Garber as the troubled hero, Lise Hilboldt as the woman who will lure him into marriage, and Philip Bosco as a waiter superbly content with his lot. (10/20/86) (Circle in the Square, 50th St. west of Broadway. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Long Runs—**BIG RIVER:** William Hauptman and Roger Miller have drawn an agreeably sentimental musical out of "The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn," and Mark Twain in Heaven has reason to be satisfied with the results. With Mr. Miller as Pap Finn. (Eugene O'Neill, 230 W. 49th St. 246-0220. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **LA CAGE AUX FOLLES:** A musical about a pair of tenderhearted middle-aged lovers presiding over a drag-queen night club in Saint-Tropez; the production is one of the most beautiful—and extravagant—ever to reach Broadway. Jerry Herman wrote the music and lyrics; the book is by Harvey Fierstein. (Palace, Broadway at 47th St. 757-2626. Tuesdays *through* Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **CATS:** Some twenty poems about cats by T. S. Eliot, set to music by Andrew Lloyd Webber. A mighty spectacle about mighty little, owing its effectiveness to Trevor Nunn's direction and to the sets and costumes by John Napier. (Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **A CHORUS LINE:** A group of young dancers audition for a handful of chorus jobs in a show not yet in rehearsal, and by the time the evening is over we know everything about all of them. (Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **THE FANTASTICKS:** 11,048 performances so far. (Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 3.) . . . **42ND STREET:** A musical based on *the old Warner Brothers movie, and by no* means an improvement on it. Directed and choreographed by the late Gower Champion. (Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **I'M NOT RAPPAPORT:** Herb Gardner's synthetic, though often entertaining, comedy about two old men who share a bench in Central Park, starring Hal Linden and Ossie Davis. (Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS:** Based on Roger Corman's 1960 horror quickie about a man-eating plant, this exuberant, jokey musical is wholly free of camp. The score is by Alan Menken, and Howard Ashman directed and wrote the book and lyrics. Martin P. Robinson designed the menacing plant. (Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., at 8th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8, and Saturdays at 7 and 10. Matinées Sundays at 2 and 5.) . . . **THE MYSTERY OF EDWIN DROOD:** Dickens' unfinished novel has been turned into a splendidly nonsensical musical by Rupert Holmes. The big cast is headed by George Rose, and the direction is by Wilford Leach. (Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **NUNSENSE:** A musical comedy by Dan Goggin. (Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-4321. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **OH! CALCUTTA!:** A collection of *short sketches that purport to give us a refreshing view of sex and do not.* (Edison, 240 W. 47th St. 302-2302. Mondays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 9:30; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **PENN & TELLER:** A sublime combination of conjuring and comedy. Penn Jillette does the talking; Teller is silent. (Westside Arts, 407 W. 43rd St. 541-8394. Thursdays and Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3.)

MISCELLANY

Next Wave Festival—There is some question at this four-year-old festival about who the avant-garde is—the people on the stage or the people in front of it. The Mark Morris Dance Group—accompanied by the St. Luke's Chamber Ensemble, Michael Feldman conducting; with Julianne Baird, soprano; Drew Minter, countertenor; and Gerald Ranck and Robert Wolinsky, harpsichord—performing "Stabat Mater," "Pièces en Concert," and "Marble Halls." (Opera House. Wednesday, Nov. 12, at 7, and Thursday through Saturday, Nov. 13-15, at 8.) . . . ¶ The Kronos Quartet in programs of contemporary music for string quartet. (Lepercq Space. Friday, Nov. 14, at 8: Philip Glass's "Mishima Quartet" and other works; Saturday, Nov. 15, at 8: Terry Riley's "Salome Dances for Peace, Parts I and II;" and Sunday, Nov. 16, at 2: Thelonious Monk's "Monk Suite," with bassist Ron Carter, and other works.) . . . ¶ Eiko & Koma presenting "New Moon Stories," a dance work in four parts. (Lepercq Space. Tuesday, Nov. 18, at 7; Wednesday through Saturday, Nov. 19-22, at 8; and Sunday, Nov. 23, at 2.) . . . ¶ The David Gordon/Pick Up Company in "Transparent Means for Travelling Light," "Seasons," and "My Folks." (Opera House. Wednesday, Nov. 19, at 7, and Thursday through Saturday, Nov. 20-22, at 8.) (Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. 1-718 636-4100.)

Radio City Music Hall—The annual Christmas show, with, of course, the Rockettes. Opens Friday, Nov. 14, and will run through Thursday, Jan. 8. (Sixth Ave. at 50th St. 757-3100. Friday, Nov. 14, at 7:30; Saturdays at 12:30, 4, and 7:30; Sunday, Nov. 16, at 12:30 and 4; Monday and Tuesday, Nov. 17-18, and Thursday, Nov. 20, at 11 and 2:30; and Friday, Nov. 21, at 2:30.)

Big Apple Circus—Opening performances of the sixth season at Lincoln Center for this one-ring tent circus. (Damrosch Park. Thursday and Friday, Nov. 13-14, and Wednesday, Nov. 19, at 7:30; Saturdays and Sundays at 12:30 and 4; and Thursday and Friday, Nov. 20-21, at 11 and 7:30. Through Sunday, Jan. 4. For information about tickets, call 391-0767.)

DANCE

New York City Ballet—Opening performances (tentative schedule) of an engagement that will run through Sunday, Feb. 22—Tues-

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day, Nov. 18, at 8: "Concerto Barocco," "Tzigane," and "Symphony in C." (A benefit performance; for tickets, call 870-5676, Mondays through Fridays.) . . . ¶ Wednesday, Nov. 19, at 8: "Interplay," "Agon," and "Symphony in C." . . . ¶ Thursday, Nov. 20, at 8: "Serenade," "Concerto for Two Solo Pianos," and "Union Jack." . . . ¶ Friday, Nov. 21, at 8: "Concerto Barocco," "Dances at a Gathering," and "Symphony in C." . . . ¶ Saturday, Nov. 22, at 2: "Scotch Symphony." "Dances at a Gathering," and "Agon." . . . ¶ Saturday, Nov. 22, at 8: "Scotch Symphony," "Interplay," and "Glass Pieces." (New York State Theatre. 870-5570.)

Joffrey Ballet—*Final performances of the engagement*—Wednesday evening, Nov. 12: "Birthday Variations," "Untitled," "Love Songs," and "Light Rain." . . . ¶ Thursday evening, Nov. 13: "Arden Court," "Esteemed Guests," and "Kettentanz." . . . ¶ Friday evening, Nov. 14: "Cloven Kingdom," "Love Songs," and "Force Field." . . . ¶ Saturday evening, Nov. 15: "Parade," "Round of Angels," "Valentine," and "Cloven Kingdom." . . . ¶ Sunday matinée, Nov. 16: "Parade," "Secret Places," "The Gardens of Boboli," and "Italian Suite." . . . ¶ Sunday evening, Nov. 16: "Esteemed Guests," "Untitled," "Valentine," and "Light Rain." (City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 246-8989. Wednesday through Saturday at 8, and Sunday at 7:30. Matinée at 2.)

Flamenco Puro—A troupe of twenty dancers, singers, and musicians from Seville. (Mark Hellinger Theatre, 237 W. 51st St. 757-7064. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Saturdays at 2 and Sundays at 3. Closes Sunday, Nov. 30.)

Dan Wagoner and Dancers—Wednesday, Nov. 12, and Saturday, Nov. 15, at 8, and Sunday, Nov. 16, at 2: "Songs," "Two Trios," and "Flee As a Bird." . . . ¶ Thursday and Friday, Nov. 13-14, at 8; Saturday, Nov. 15, at 2; and Sunday, Nov. 16, at 7:30: "Evening Star," "Two Trios," and "'Round This World, Baby Mine." (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800.)

Lar Lubovitch Dance Company—A one-week engagement—"Blood" (première), "Concerto Six Twenty-Two," and "A Brahms Symphony." (City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 246-8989. Tuesday, Nov. 18, at 7:30; Wednesday through Friday, Nov. 19-21, at 8; Saturday, Nov. 22, at 2 and 8; and Sunday, Nov. 23, at 3.)

Juilliard Dance Ensemble—Benefit performances of new and repertory works. With the Juilliard Chamber Ensemble. (Juilliard Theatre, 155 W. 65th. St. Friday and Saturday, Nov. 14-15, at 8; Sunday, Nov. 16, at 3; and Monday, Nov. 17, at 8. For tickets, call 874-7515.)

Roger Tolle and Dancers—In a program of new and repertory works. (Midtown Y, 344 E. 14th St. 674-7200. Saturday and Sunday, Nov. 15-16, at 8.)

Peridance—A one-week engagement—Tuesday, Nov. 18, at 7:30: "Ragtime" and "Songs" (premières), "Chameleon Dances" (American première), "Svsplkt," and "Bolero." . . . ¶ Wednesday, Nov. 19, at 8; Saturday, Nov. 22, at 2 and 8; and Sunday, Nov. 23, at 8: "Magnificat," "Songs," "Les Chemins de l'Amour," "Veil of Dawn," and "Ragtime." . . . ¶ Thursday and Friday, Nov. 20-21, at 8, and Sunday, Nov. 23, at 2: "Autumn," "Tango," "Chameleon Dances," "Svsplkt," and "Bolero." (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800.)

Sato Takako's Ryukyuan Dance Company—A company of dancers and musicians from Japan, in a program of new works and traditional Okinawan dance. (Asia Society, 725 Park Ave., at 70th St. 517-2742. Friday and Saturday, Nov. 21-22, at 8.)

NIGHT LIFE

(A highly arbitrary listing in which bold-face type is used to pick out a few of the more notable performers in town. . . . ¶ Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives that are subject to last-minute change; it is therefore always advisable to call ahead.)

Abilene Café, 359 Second Ave., at 21st St. (473-8908)—A white-brick-faced all-blues bar and restaurant that's next door to a yellow-brick-faced funeral parlor. Two fiery Chicago guitarists, **MAGIC SLIM** and **LUTHER (GUITAR JUNIOR) JOHNSON,** share the bandstand on Friday and Saturday, Nov. 14-15, and on the following weekend, Nov. 21-22, drummer **BERNARD (PRETTY) PURDIE** and bassist **CHUCK RAINEY** will head up a band. Other bluespersons can be heard during the rest of the week. Music from about nine.

Algonquin Hotel, 59 W. 44th St. (840-6800)—**JULIE WILSON,** an elegant, dramatic singer who wears a gardenia above her left ear à la Billie Holiday, is in the Oak Room singing "Blues in the Night," "Lydia, the Tattooed Lady," "A Sleepin' Bee," and a lot of other Harold Arlen songs. William Roy is her accompanist. Shows Tuesdays through Saturdays at nine-fifteen and eleven-fifteen. Dining.

Angry Squire, 216 Seventh Ave., at 23rd St. (242-9066)—A long, narrow bar and restaurant that features nautical impedimenta and jazz musicians of every stripe. Pianist **MICHELE ROSEWOMAN,** tenor saxophonist **RICKY FORD,** and bassist **RUFUS REID** perform on Friday and Saturday, Nov. 14-15, and on Friday and Saturday, Nov. 21-22, guitarist **DOM MINASI'S** threesome comes on board. Sets begin Sundays through Thursdays at nine-thirty, and Fridays and Saturdays at ten.

Ballroom, 253 W. 28th St. (244-3005)—A neat-as-a-pin music room on the edge of Chelsea, near the flower and fur markets, where, Wednesdays through Saturdays at six-thirty, you will find the meticulous, tiny-voiced **BLOSSOM DEARIE** singing "I'm Hip," "Pro Musica Antiqua," and "My New Celebrity Is You." **KAREN AKERS** sings at nine Wednesday and Thursday, Nov. 12-13, and at nine and eleven Friday and Saturday, Nov. 14-15. Starting Tuesday, Nov. 18, at nine, Rita Gardner will have the mike, and on Wednesday, Nov. 19, at eleven, Laurie Beechman, the current Grizabella in "Cats," will start singing.

Blue Note, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—The big blue banner that flies above the entrance to this club may not be modest ("Jazz Capital of the World," it says), but it looks nice flapping in the breeze. Angela Bofill sings here through Sunday, Nov. 16; on Monday, Nov. 17, the Jorge Anders Big Band drops by; and starting Tuesday, Nov. 18, flutist **DAVE VALENTIN'S** quintet will trade sets with singer Diane Schuur and her trio. Music after nine. Dining.

Bottom Line, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—The varied roster: Wednesdays, the loose-limbed, wavy-haired saloon singer and cutup **BUSTER POINDEXTER & THE BANSHEES OF BLUE;** Thursday, Nov. 13, country-pop baritone and banjoist **JOHN HARTFORD,** with Nanci Griffith; Friday, Nov. 14, Montreux; Saturday and Sunday, Nov. 15-16, the Nylons; Tuesday, Nov. 18, the San Francisco comedy troupe Duck's Breath Mystery Theatre; and Friday and Saturday, Nov. 21-22, Nashville-based singer-songwriter John Hiatt and the Robert Cray band. Shows Sundays through Thursdays at eight and eleven, and Fridays and Saturdays at eight-thirty and eleven-thirty. Dining.

CORT
THEATRE

Bradley's, 70 University Pl., at 11th St. (228-6440)—A great up-close view from a barstool (unless there are a lot of standees, which is usually the case) of first-rate pianists and bassists. **KIRK LIGHTSEY** and **SANTI DEBRIANO** collaborate through Saturday, Nov. 15; on Sunday, Nov. 16, the intense, lyrical French-born pianist **MICHEL PETRUCCIANI** and **RON MC CLURE** perform; and on Monday, Nov. 17, **JOHN HICKS** and **WALTER BOOKER** go to work. Music from nine-forty-five. Dining.

Carlos I, 432 Sixth Ave., at 10th St. (982-3260)—Long communal tables swathed in pink and a bandstand panelled in oak. **LOUIE BELLSON,** a fine modern swing drummer described by Ellington (with whom he did two stints) as "the epitome of perfection," leads his quartet through Sunday, Nov. 16, and on Tuesday, Nov. 18, violinist **BILLY BANG** moves in with his sextet. Music from nine every night except Monday. Dining.

Carlyle Hotel, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—**BOBBY SHORT** is in the Café Carlyle, singing Porter, Coward, Arlen, and Sondheim, with expert musical support from bassist **BEVERLY PEER** and drummer **ROBBIE SCOTT** and with firm moral support from his myriad admirers, only about eighty of whom are allowed in the room at one time. Sets at ten and midnight Tuesdays through Saturdays. . . . ¶ Over in the Bemelmans Bar, **BARBARA CARROLL** is presiding at the piano. Music from nine-forty-five Tuesdays through Saturdays.

Fat Tuesday's, 190 Third Ave., at 17th St. (533-7902)—There's not a lot of elbow- or headroom in this downstairs jazz club, but the musicians sometimes make out-of-body travel possible. Pianist **CARLA BLEY** takes her band through some of her loopy, romping, hummable compositions through Sunday, Nov. 16, and on Tuesday, Nov. 18, incantatory pianist **MC COY TYNER** will find space for himself and his big band. Mondays are the property of guitarist and recording innovator **LES PAUL** and his trio. Music at nine. Dining.

Greene Street, 101 Greene St. (925-2415)—Only slightly smaller than an airplane hangar but considerably fancier. On clear nights, the piano, situated in a grove of palms in the south-central region of the dining room, is visible from the bar. The pianists: through Saturday, Nov. 15, **ONAJE ALLAN GUMBS;** Sunday, Nov. 16, Keith MacDonald; and starting Tuesday, Nov. 18, **MICKEY TUCKER.** Sets begin at seven Tuesdays through Thursdays, at seven-thirty Fridays and Saturdays, and at six on Sundays. Closed Monday, Nov. 17.

Gregory's, 1149 First Ave., at 63rd St. (371-2220)—A small, dark bar, with ancient marching-band instruments on the walls, Art Tatum and Earl Hines on the jukebox, and an upright piano that seats four (not counting the pianist). Wednesdays through Saturdays, Kitt Moran sings with accompaniment from pianist Mike Moran and bassist Andy Eulau; Sundays and Mondays **BOB DOROUGH,** a wonderful, twangy, bop-rooted singer and pianist, receives support from bassist **BILL TAKAS;** and on Tuesdays guitarist **CHUCK WAYNE** heads up a trio. All these groups begin at ten.

Knickerbocker Saloon, 33 University Pl., at 9th St. (228-8490)—A pleasant corner bar and restaurant with a piano at the center of things. **LOU LEVY,** an accompanist for Ella Fitzgerald and Peggy Lee in the fifties and a member of the Charlie Parker-inspired band Supersax in the seventies, works with bassist John Goldsby through Saturday, Nov. 15. On Tuesday, Nov. 18, **BILL MAYS** joins Mr. Goldsby. Sundays and Mondays are in the hands of Esther Blue. Music from nine-thirty.

Lone Star Café, 61 Fifth Ave., at 13th St. (242-1664)—A spirited, noisy, crowded hangout for expatriate Texans, French tourists, and others in search of *les bons temps.* Wednesday, Nov. 12, the Blasters' **PHIL ALVIN,** who collects old 78s, owns a 1948 Epiphone acoustic guitar, and has recently been singing songs first done by Bing Crosby, Cab Calloway, and Peetie Wheatstraw; Thursday, Nov. 13, Firefall and Chris Daniels; Friday and Saturday, Nov. 14-15, **ROBERT GORDON** and Rockin' Horse; Sunday and Monday, Nov. 16-17, Chicago bluesmen **BUDDY GUY** and **JUNIOR WELLS;** and

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22

Friday and Saturday, Nov. 21-22, Louisiana swamp cat **DR. JOHN** and **MARCIA BALL**, a Louisiana-born, Texas-based country blues and rock singer. Music after nine nightly. Dining.

MICHAEL'S PUB, 211 E. 55th St. (758-2272)—From the glassed-in streetside room, you can see the tubbed saplings in the adjacent office-tower frontage, and in the spiffy back room you can see and hear Jonathan Schwartz, who is singing a program called "Mostly Hart." (That which isn't Hart is mostly his father, Arthur.) Shows Tuesdays through Saturdays at nine and eleven. On Mondays after nine-thirty, Woody Allen is likely to show up to play celebrity clarinet with a New Orleans-style sextet. Dining. Closed Sundays.

MIKELL'S, 760 Columbus Ave., at 97th St. (864-8832)—A lively uptown bar and restaurant, with signed photographs of some swinging non-musicians on the walls (Reggie Jackson smiling shyly, Dave Winfield tuning up in the cage) and some heavy hitters on the bandstand. The lineup, in part: Thursday, Nov. 13, and Wednesday, Nov. 19, Big Dog (with **KENNY KIRKLAND,** Jim Campagnola, and others); Friday and Saturday, Nov. 14-15, zingy, Jabberwockian jazz vocalist and lyricist **JON HENDRICKS;** and Thursday through Saturday, Nov. 20-22, jazz-pop singer Gloria Lynne. Music from about ten until two.

RITZ, 119 E. 11th St. (254-2800)—Fifty years ago, people practiced the jitterbug and the foxtrot in this ballroom; today's patrons listen to rock (hard-core rock, soft-core rock, no-core rock) and sometimes practice a combination of exercise and intimacy known as slam dancing. Thursday and Friday, Nov. 13-14, pre-punk primitivist **IGGY POP,** whose credit-card company calls him James Osterberg and whose dad sometimes calls him Jimbo; Saturday, Nov. 15, Gene Loves Jezebel and Until December; Thursday, Nov. 20, Berlin and the Rainmakers; Friday, Nov. 21, Peter Murphy and the Bolshoi; and Saturday, Nov. 22, **BILLY BRAGG,** some of whose ballads about domestic life in "the Land of a Thousand Doses" are among the best songs to come out of England since Elvis Costello's early efforts. Shows begin at nine Sundays through Thursdays, and at eleven Fridays and Saturdays.

SOUNDS OF BRAZIL, 204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (243-4940)—Brazilian music, African music, Caribbean music, and American music. The schedule: Wednesday and Thursday, Nov. 12-13, R. & B. singer **ETTA JAMES** and soul singer **OTIS CLAY;** Friday, Nov. 14, **LOREMIL MACHADO & THE SARAVA BAHIA BAND;** Saturday, Nov. 15, **MIKATA,** an Afro-Carib dance band; Tuesday, Nov. 18, a tribute to Luiz Bonfá, the Brazilian guitarist and composer who was one of the leaders of the bossa-nova movement; Wednesday and Thursday, Nov. 19-20, **TITO PUENTE,** *el dueño y señor de los timbales;* and Friday and Saturday, Nov. 21-22, **PÉ-DE-BOI.** Music from nine Tuesdays through Thursdays, and from eleven Fridays and Saturdays. Dining. Closed Sundays and Mondays.

SWEET BASIL, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—Knotty-pine walls and adventurous music: the **ART FARMER–BENNY GOLSON JAZZTET**—a lean, trim sextet that was formed in the hard-bop era and that features now (as it did then) the lyrical Farmer on flugelhorn, Golson (the group's chief composer) on tenor saxophone, and **CURTIS FULLER** on trombone—performs through Sunday, Nov. 16. On Tuesday, Nov. 18, alto saxophonist **TIM BERNE** brings in his quintet, and on Mondays the **GIL EVANS ORCHESTRA**—whose ranks usually include **HOWARD JOHNSON** on tuba and pennywhistle, **GEORGE ADAMS** on tenor sax, **CHRIS HUNTER** on alto sax, and **LEW SOLOFF** and **SHUNZO ONO** on trumpets—raises the roof. Shows from about ten. Dining.

TRAMPS, 125 E. 15th St. (777-5077)—A refreshingly simple blues and rock club. Wednesday, Nov. 12, comedian Lisabeth, Das Furlines, and They Might Be Giants; Thursday, Nov. 13, the Silos and Uncle Bonsai; Friday through Sunday, Nov. 14-16, **JOHNNY COPELAND;** Tuesday, Nov. 18, Funk Philharmonic; Wednesday, Nov. 19, the Tapes and Emmi; and Friday and Saturday, Nov. 21-22, Big Time Sarah. Shows after nine-thirty.

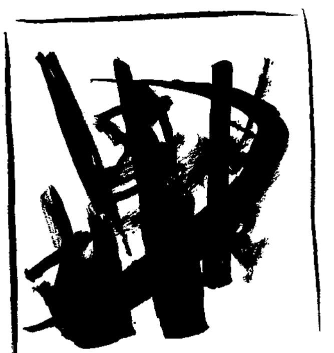
VILLAGE GATE, 160 Bleecker St. (475-5120)—Salsa bands get going in the big downstairs space on Monday nights after nine; on Nov. 17, **EL GRAN COMBO,** the **LOUIE RAMIREZ Y RAY DE LA PAZ** orchestra, and alto saxophonist **BOBBY WATSON,** the guest soloist, will all hold forth. . . . ¶ In the Terrace Bar, **NINA SHELDON** and Todd Coolman play piano-bass duets through Sunday, Nov. 16, and on Tuesday, Nov. 18, vibraphonist and former charter-boat captain **TEDDY CHARLES** and pianist **HAROLD DANKO** will set sail. Jazz harpist **DAPHNE HELLMAN** is also present, with her trio, on Tuesdays. Music from ten.

VILLAGE VANGUARD, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—This hallowed basement establishment is the most famous jazz club in the world. **GEORGE COLEMAN,** a Memphis-born blues-leaning tenor saxophonist and the composer of (among other numbers on local themes) a slow blues called "Mayor Koch," leads his quartet through Sunday, Nov. 16, and starting Tuesday, Nov. 18, guitarist **JOHN ABERCROMBIE'S** quartet takes charge. Mondays remain prime time for the **MEL LEWIS ORCHESTRA.** Music from ten.

WEST END, 2911 Broadway, at 113th St. (666-8750)—The big room in this student rest stop (Columbia U. is across the street) has a noninstitutional cafeteria, a bar that can seat a marching band, and a jukebox. The smaller room has tables, booths, a couple of hanging plants, and good live jazz. The musicians: through Sunday, Nov. 16, vocalist Gail Wynters, with guitarist Bill Wurtzel's trio (violinist-bassist Russell George and drummer **BERNARD PURDIE**); Tuesday, Nov. 18, the Joel Forrester ensemble; and starting Wednesday, Nov. 19, vibraphonist **JAY HOGGARD'S** quartet. Shows from about nine. Dining.

WHIPPOORWILL, 18 E. 18th St. (675-7100)—A plush downstairs club, with a lot of art on the walls and an Oriental rug on the bandstand. A septet that features trumpeter **CLARK TERRY** and the vocal duo of **MARION COWINGS** and **KIM SHAW** is in the house through Sunday, Nov. 16, and on Tuesday, Nov. 18, organist **BROTHER JACK MC DUFF** and saxophonist **DAVID (FATHEAD) NEWMAN** arrive with their quintet. Mondays are reserved for trumpeter Tex Allen's sextet. Sets begin at nine. Dining. . . . ¶ Upstairs, in Joanna (675-7900), an elegant, high-ceilinged room with a grand piano in it, **HUGH LAWSON** plays Tuesdays through Fridays from six to nine and Mondays from six until the heeltap of the night. The rest of the week (Tuesdays through Sundays from nine-thirty) belongs to another Detroiter, the swinging, pellucid **TOMMY FLANAGAN,** and to his excellent bassist, **GEORGE MRAZ.** Dining.

ZINNO, 126 W. 13th St. (924-5182)—If you like pictures of cows, there's a good one here, by the British painter Malcolm Morley, of some Holsteins adrift in a Turneresque landscape. There's also jazz, which flows peaceably from a passageway between the front-room bar and the back-room restaurant. Pianist **HILTON RUIZ** teams up with bassist **JIMMY ROWSER** on Wednesday and Thursday, Nov. 12-13, and with a bassist to be named later on Friday and Saturday, Nov. 14-15. Starting Monday, Nov. 17, fellow-Memphians **JAMES WILLIAMS** and **JAMIL NASSER** will work in tandem. On Sundays, **GENE BERTONCINI** and **MICHAEL MOORE** play glistening guitar-bass duets. Music weeknights from eight and Sundays from seven.



JAZZ / FOLK / ROCK CONCERTS, PERSONAL APPEARANCES, ETC.

STEVE WINWOOD—With Level 42. (Madison Square Garden. 564-4400. Thursday, Nov. 13, at 8.)

MULGREW MILLER–DONALD HARRISON QUARTET—New School Auditorium, 66 W. 12th St. Friday, Nov. 14, at 6. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.

GENERAL PUBLIC—With KTP. (Felt Forum, Madison Square Garden. 564-4400. Saturday, Nov. 15, at 8.)

GIORA FEIDMAN KLEZMER QUARTET—Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 570-3949. Saturday, Nov. 15, at 8.

FOLK MUSIC OF CAMBODIA—Uris Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 81st St. Sunday, Nov. 16, at 2:30. For information about tickets, call 362-3366.

HOLLY NEAR AND CRIS WILLIAMSON—Avery Fisher Hall. 874-2424. Sunday, Nov. 16, at 8:30.

ORCHESTRAL MANOEUVRES IN THE DARK—With the Models. (Radio City Music Hall, Sixth Ave. at 50th St. 757-3100. Wednesday, Nov. 19, at 8.)

ATAHUALPA YUPANQUI—Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. 864-5400. Friday, Nov. 21, at 8.

BUTCH MORRIS SYSTEMS ORCHESTRA—Great Hall, Cooper Union, Third Ave. at 7th St. Friday, Nov. 21, at 8. *No tickets necessary.*

MUHAL RICHARD ABRAMS QUARTET—Jazz Center of New York, 380 Lafayette St. 505-5660. Friday and Saturday, Nov. 21-22, at 9:30 and 11.

ART

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.)

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

HANNELORE BARON—Paper-and-fabric collages inspired by the writings of Isak Dinesen. Through Dec. 3. (Schlesinger-Boisanté, 822 Madison Ave., at 69th St.)

JACOBO BORGES—New paintings, including a series of self-portraits. Through Dec. 6. (CDS Gallery, 13 E. 75th St. Open Mondays.)

WALTER DE MARIA—Two sculptural installations, both recent works. Through Saturday, Nov. 22. (Fourcade, 36 E. 75th St.)

MARY FAULCONER—Miniature paintings that focus on large subjects—Hong Kong Harbor, for instance, or a building of Queens Royal College, Trinidad. Through Nov. 29. (Schiller-Wapner, 1 E. 61st St.)

ARNOLD FRIEDMAN (1874-1946)—Paintings. Through Dec. 27. (Salander-O'Reilly, 22 E. 80th St. Open Mondays.)

BALCOMB GREENE—New paintings. Through Dec. 6. (Perlow, 980 Madison Ave., at 76th St.)

GIACOMO MANZÙ—Sculptures and drawings. Through Dec. 6. (Weintraub, 992 Madison Ave., at 77th St.)

ANDRÉ MASSON—Sixty paintings, plus works on paper and sculptures. Through Thursday, Nov. 20. (Kouros, 23 E. 73rd St.) . . . ¶ Another show of paintings and works on paper. Through Nov. 29. (Saidenberg, 1018 Madison Ave., at 79th St. Opens at 1 on Saturdays.)

HENRY MOORE (1898-1986)/ **JOAN MIRÓ** (1893-1983)—Maquettes and prints. / Aquatints and drawings. Through Dec. 31. (Silberberg, 16 E. 79th St. Open Mondays.)

ROGER MÜHL—Floral landscapes by an artist who uses a palette knife. Through Saturday, Nov. 15. (David Findlay, 984 Madison Ave., at 77th St.)

JACKSON POLLOCK (1912-56)—Paintings and drawings, 1943-46, including some from his "Sgrafitto" series. Through Dec. 20. (McCoy, 19 E. 71st St.)

MAURICE PRENDERGAST (1859-1924)—A benefit

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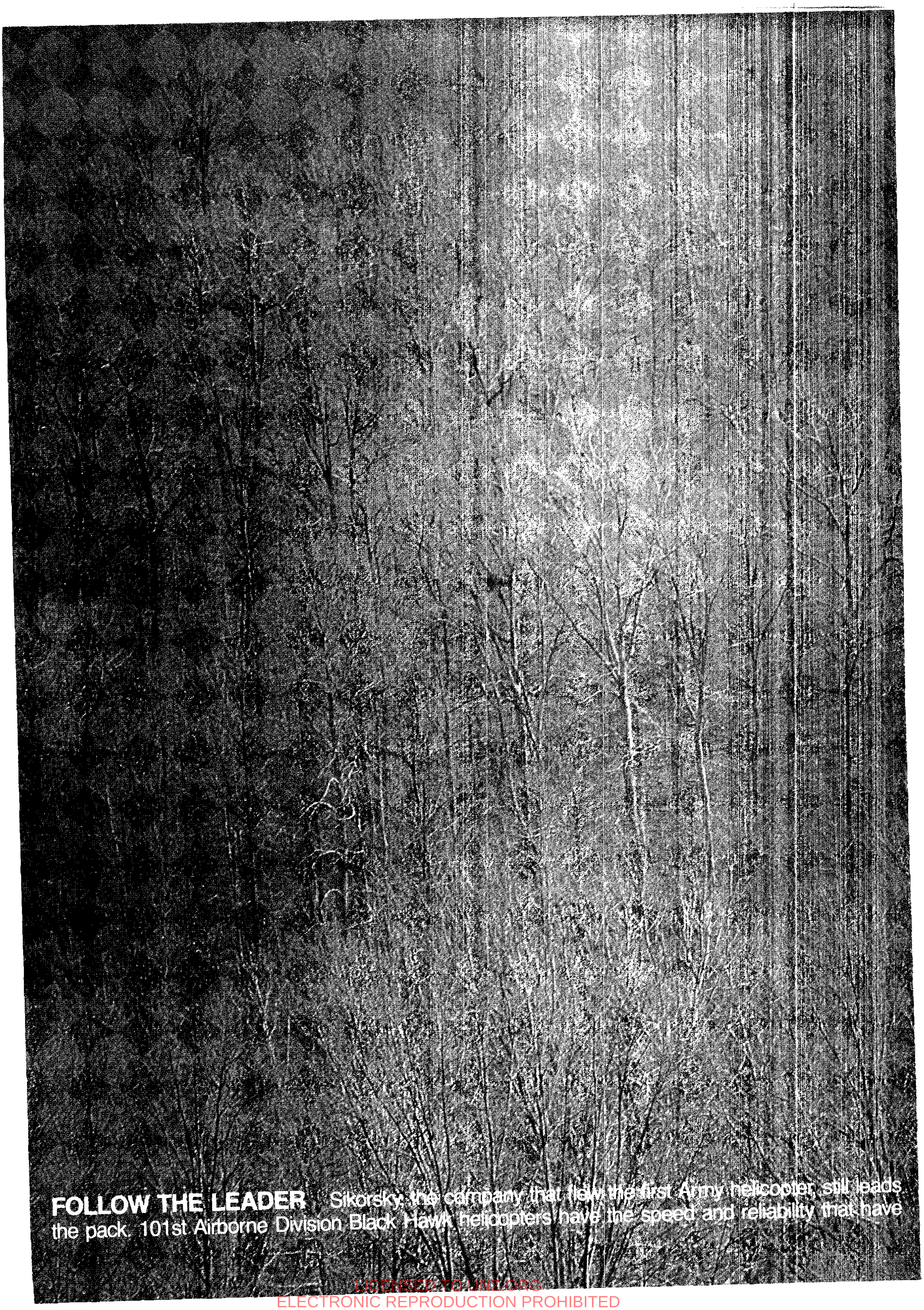

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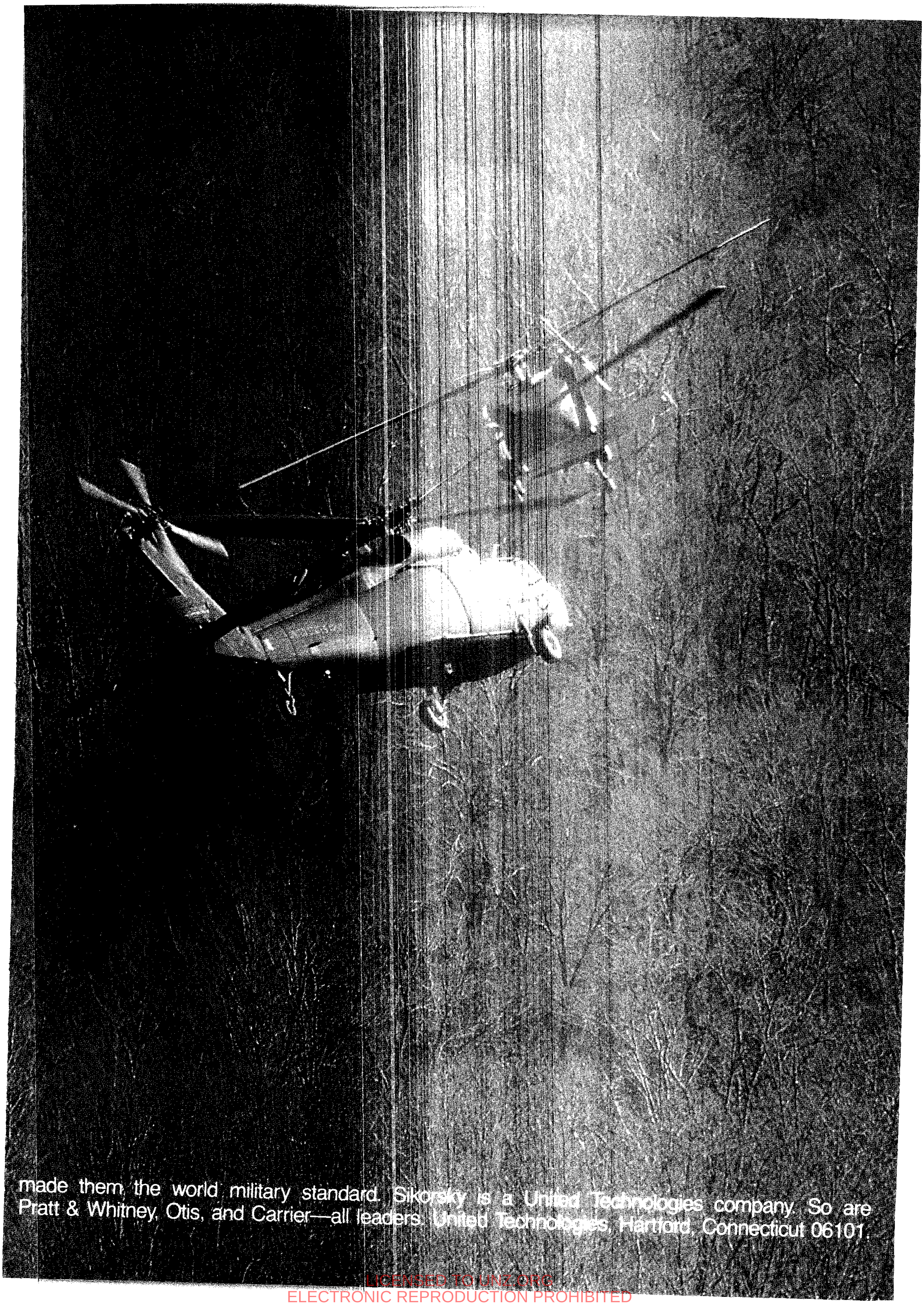

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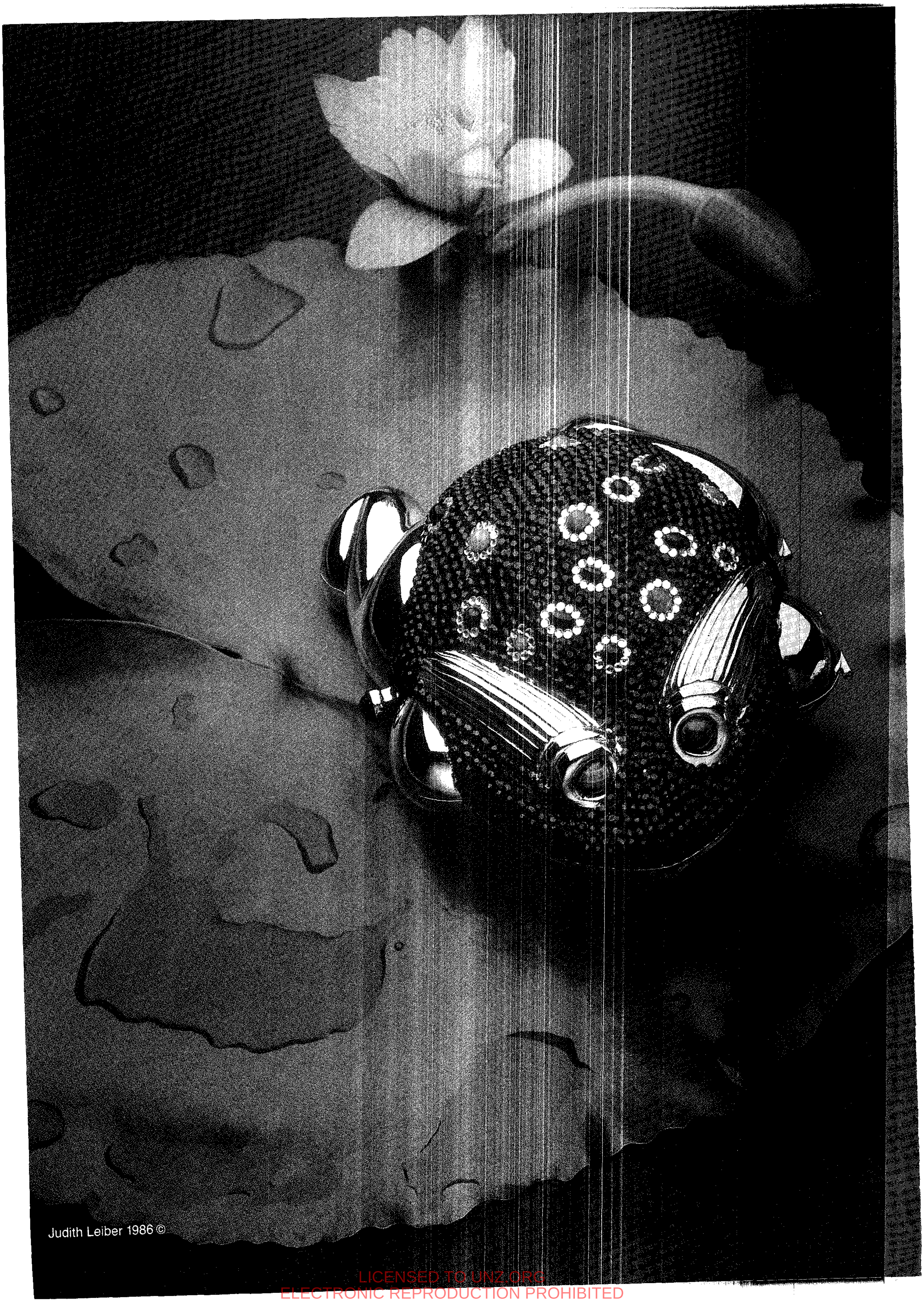
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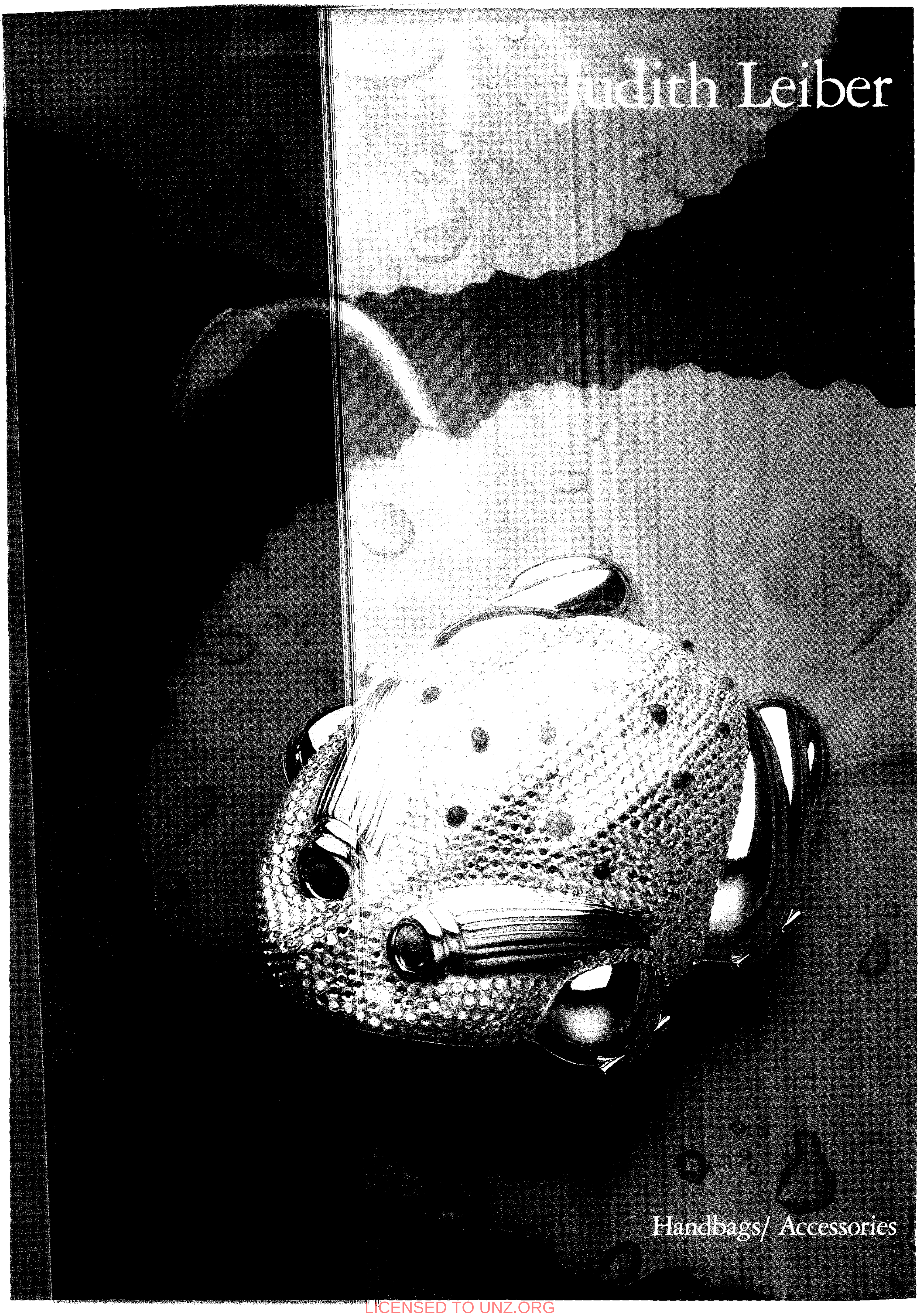
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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

loan show of watercolors of Italian, French, and American vistas which were executed between 1896 and 1906. Through Dec. 6. (Coe Kerr, 49 E. 82nd St. Open Mondays.)

Ken Price—Large clay bowls with scenes painted on them. Through Dec. 2. (Willard, 29 E. 72nd St.)

Robert Rauschenberg—Three shows. More than sixty drawings completed between 1958 and 1968. Through Dec. 6. (Acquavella, 18 E. 79th St. Open Mondays.) . . . ¶ Photographs and photocollages from the late seventies and early eighties. Through Saturday, Nov. 15. (Visual Arts Museum, 209 E. 23rd St. Mondays through Thursdays, 9 to 9; Fridays and Saturdays, 9 to 4.) . . . ¶ Brand-new metal wall constructions. Through Saturday, Nov. 22. (Castelli, 420 West Broadway.)

Edda Renouf—Abstractions in mixed mediums on paper. Through Saturday, Nov. 22. (Hamilton, 19 E. 71st St.)

Herman Rose and Vincent Canade (1903-77)—Paintings and drawings from the thirties and forties. Through Nov. 29. (Radann, 790 Madison Ave., at 67th St. Opens at noon. Mr. Rose has a complementary show at Fischbach, 24 W. 57th St.)

Joop Sanders—Paintings and drawings by an artist of the New York School. Through Dec. 6. (Kren, 22 E. 65th St.)

Fritz Scholder—Paintings in which figures and interiors are reduced to their basic forms. Through Nov. 29. (ACA, 21 E. 67th St.)

Augustus Vincent Tack (1870-1949)—Abstract paintings on loan from the Phillips Collection, Washington. Through Dec. 4. (Knoedler, 19 E. 70th St.)

Herk Van Tongeren—New bronzes. Through Dec. 13. (Cordier & Ekstrom, 417 E. 75th St.)

Max Weber (1881-1961)—Paintings, drawings, and prints from his Cubist periods. Through Nov. 29. (Forum, 1018 Madison Ave., at 79th St.)

Chris Wilmarth—Abstract wall sculptures (three extending to the floor) using bronze, steel, and glass. Through Dec. 3. (Hirschl & Adler Modern, 851 Madison Ave., at 70th St.)

Group Show—Paintings, drawings, and prints by early-twentieth-century European Expressionists, including Beckmann, Schiele, Dix, and Kirchner. Through Dec. 20. (Lafayette Parke, 58 E. 79th St.)

Sculpture—A 1959-60 steel-and-canvas piece by Lee Bontecou is complemented by works in various materials by six younger artists (Carol Hepper, Steve Wood) who share Bontecou's method of grafting one material onto another. Through Dec. 2. (Sculpture Center, 167 E. 69th St.)

GALLERIES—57th STREET AREA

Nicholas Africano—In addition to building up figures in deep relief with painted canvas on canvas, this artist now sculpts them in the round, using translucent cast glass, wood, cloth, marble, and so on. Through Nov. 29. (Holly Solomon, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. Open Mondays.)

Luis Cruz Azaceta / Colin Lanceley—Wall-mounted unstretched canvases by an artist whose grisly metaphorical self-portraits are a continuing theme. Through Thursday, Nov. 20. / Semi-abstract oils with sections of carved-wood collage. Through Dec. 31. (Frumkin, 50 W. 57th St.)

William Bailey—Recent paintings and drawings of still-lifes and figures. Through Dec. 3. (Schoelkopf, 50 W. 57th St.)

Jim Butler—Paintings in which figures bearing religious or mythical trappings (wings, halos) float high above the earth, sometimes in acrobatic postures. Through Thursday, Nov. 20. (De Nagy, 41 W. 57th St.)

John Duff / John Cage—Recent abstract painted-fibre-glass sculptures. Through Nov. 29. / Drawings. Through Dec. 6. (Blum Helman, 20 W. 57th St.)

Mary Frank—A large color monoprint of six dancing figures, a bronze head, chimeras portrayed in papier-mâché or terra-cotta sculptures and on paper, and more. Through Dec. 13. (Zabriskie, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. Open Mondays.)

Arthur Gibbons / Anne Truitt—Cutout painted-steel sculptures evoking birds and plants, mostly, plus a single piece combining bronze, stainless steel, and rusted steel. Through Nov. 29. / Painted-wood columns executed between 1971 and 1983. Through Dec. 6. (Emmerich, 41 E. 57th St.)

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Jill Giegerich—Wall constructions made of heavy-duty building materials—tar paper, copper, rubber carpeting, plywood. Through Nov. 29. (McKee, 41 E. 57th St.)

Valerie Jaudon—New abstract paintings. Through Nov. 29. (Janis, 110 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

Paul Jenkins—New paintings. Through Dec. 6. (Gimpel, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

Wolf Kahn—Large-scale hand-colored monoprints. Through Nov. 26. (Associated American Artists, 20 W. 57th St.)

William King—New work. Through Dec. 31. (Dintenfass, 50 W. 57th St.)

Wolfgang Laib—One of the works by this ascetic artist consists of thirty-six metal bowls filled with rice and lined up behind a small boulder; another is a large rectangle of gold-colored hazelnut pollen he gathered in his native Germany. Through Dec. 6. (Galerie Maeght Lelong, 20 W. 57th St.)

Jeannette LeRoy—Still-life pencil drawings. Through Dec. 2. (Marlborough, 40 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

René Magritte (1898-1967)—Paintings. Through Dec. 20. (Herstand, 24 W. 57th St.)

Rodrigo Moynihan / Raoul Ubac—Studio interiors, still-lifes, nudes, and self-portraits. / Vintage prints by a Belgian Surrealist. Through Nov. 29. (Robert Miller, 41 E. 57th St.)

George Nick / Herman Rose—New England landscapes and cityscapes. / Representational landscapes and flower still-lifes. Through Dec. 3. (Fischbach, 24 W. 57th St. Mr. Rose has a complementary show at Radann, 790 Madison Ave., at 67th St.)

John Opper / Steve Currie—Abstract paintings. / Abstract sculptures in wood, metal lath, wax, and plaster. Through Nov. 26. (Borgenicht, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

Lincoln Perry—Large oil paintings of an allegorical cast, involving rather stylized figures. Through Nov. 29. (Tatistcheff, 50 W. 57th St.)

Julian Schnabel—Landscapes and figures, or parts of figures, painted on Kabuki backdrops; this time the works are uninterrupted by crockery or antlers. Through Nov. 29. (Pace, 32 E. 57th St.)

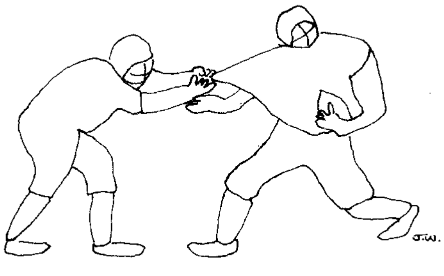
Karl Schrag—Landscapes, still-lifes, and portraits. Through Dec. 6. (Kraushaar, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

Wallace H. Smith—Robust paintings by an eighty-five-year-old artist whose career has carried him to France, to Union Square, and back to his native St. Louis, with summer sojourns in Michigan. Through Dec. 3. (Armstrong, 50 W. 57th St.)

John Wilde—Small oil paintings on panels and silverpoint drawings that reflect a Magic Realist influence. Through Nov. 29. (Schmidt Bingham, 41 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

Betty Woodman—Earthenware sculptures. Through Nov. 29. (Protetch, 37 W. 57th St.)

Group Show—Abstract paintings from the thirties by artists who either worked for the W.P.A. or were members of the American Abstract Artists—Ilya Bolotowsky's seventeen-foot reconstruction of his mural for a Williamsburg housing project is one of the works on display. Through Nov. 29. (Washburn, 41 E. 57th St.)



Sculpture—Some new works by Mary Frank, Pat Lasch, and Winifred Lutz are in a tenth-anniversary exhibition at the Marilyn Pearl Gallery. Through Saturday, Nov. 15. (38 E. 57th St.) . . . ¶ The forty-ninth annual show of the Sculptors Guild includes pieces by more than seventy of its members, including Bill Barrett, Vera Schupack, Richard McDermott Miller, and Jane B. Armstrong. Through Nov. 24. (Lever House, 390 Park Ave., at 54th St. Mondays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

GALLERIES—SoHo

John Ahearn and Rigoberto Torres—Tableaux of cast-fibre-glass figures portraying life in the South Bronx. Through Dec. 3. (Alexander, 59 Wooster St.)

Terry Allen / Susan Leopold—Mixed-medium pieces commenting on the Vietnam War—one showing a pig standing beneath an axe, another showing a broken rifle stock. The series is called "Youth in Asia." / Tiny tableaux of interiors contained in illuminated boxes and viewed through wide-angle lenses. Through Saturday, Nov. 22. (Weber, 142 Greene St.)

Robert Anderson—Paintings in which air-brushed Photo-Realist figures are juxtaposed with traditionally painted copies of classic and modern art works. Through Saturday, Nov. 22. (Littlejohn-Smith, 133 Greene St. Opens Sundays at 1.)

Joseph Beuys (1921-86)—Environmental sculptures, such as "F.I.U. Car" (1985) and "Mannloch" (1977), plus drawings, blackboards, and a steel-and-glass vitrine containing a hearthstone. Through Nov. 29. (Feldman, 31 Mercer St.) . . . ¶ Posters the artist made to publicize his exhibitions. Through Wednesday, Nov. 19. (Gibson, 568 Broadway.)

Bård Breivik—Black-granite and cast-iron sculptures. Through Dec. 6. (Germans van Eck, 420 West Broadway.)

Thomas Cornell—A canvas mural for all seasons commissioned by the John Hancock insurance company and accompanied by numerous preparatory sketches. Through Nov. 29. (Einstein, 591 Broadway.)

Virginia Cuppaidge—Abstract paintings suggestive of tropical fruits and flowers, perhaps attributable to the artist's childhood years in Australia. Through Nov. 29. (Stephen Rosenberg, 115 Wooster St. Opens at noon.)

Natalie Edgar—Abstract landscapes. Through Dec. 6. (Ingber, 415 West Broadway.)

Louise Fishman—Abstract oils. Through Saturday, Nov. 15. (Baskerville+Watson, 578 Broadway.)

Jacques Flechemuller—Colorful acrylic paintings, two of them of fishing lures. Through Nov. 29. (Plumb, 81 Greene St.)

Michael Gitlin—Abstract wall sculptures (irregularly shaped wood structures, with assorted mediums incorporated), plus drawings. Through Dec. 6. (Davis, 568 Broadway.)

Suellen Glashausser—Relief sculptures in a series called "Gardens." Through Nov. 26. (Eno, 164 Mercer St. Opens at noon; open Sundays, 1 to 5.)

Denise Green—Recent abstract paintings. Through Nov. 29. (Viafora, 568 Broadway.)

Elizabeth Harms / Fontaine Dunn—High-intensity color abstractions. / Nonobjective drawings. Through Saturday, Nov. 22. (Condeso-Lawler, 76 Greene St.)

Mark Innerst—Small landscapes of the Luminist school, varnished and glazed like Dutch Old Masters and meticulously framed by the artist. Through Nov. 29. (Marcus, 578 Broadway.)

Gary Kuehn—One of this sculptor's specialties is embedding one prong of a pickaxe in a block of wood and enlarging and converting the other prong into a ladder, say, or a chair, or a large swirl of wrought iron. Through Dec. 6. (Roeder, 545 Broadway. Opens at noon Wednesdays through Saturdays.)

Robert Longo—Large sculptures, one of them

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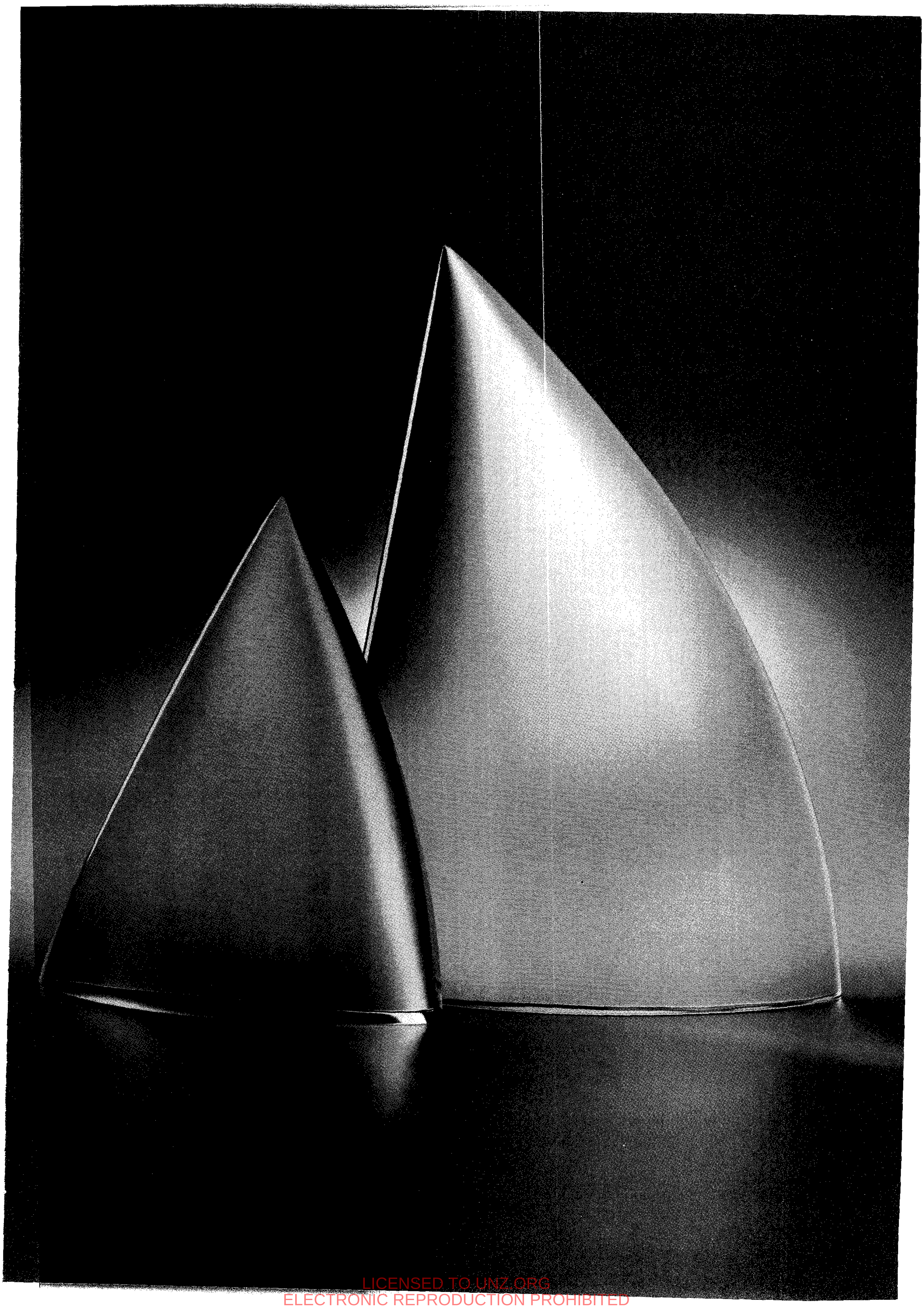

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

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an incredibly bellicose warrior, another an orbiting satellite, which combine a vast assortment of materials: Corten steel, chrome-plated hydrocal, painted canvases, cast bronze, wood. Through Saturday, Nov. 15. (Metro Pictures, 150 Greene St.)

Sam Messer—Outsize paintings filled with fantasy creatures and grotesqueries, ranging from court jesters to two-headed calves. Through Saturday, Nov. 15. (Siegel, in Exhibition Space at 112 Greene St.)

Stephen Mueller—Abstract Expressionist paintings done in strong colors and with considerable vigor. Through Nov. 26. (Nosei, 100 Prince St.)

Mimmo Paladino—New bronzes, among them a cart with a missing wheel, and sombre paintings on wood. Through Saturday, Nov. 15. (Sperone Westwater, 142 Greene St.)

Ellen Phelan—Paintings and drawings. Through Nov. 29. (Toll, 146 Greene St.)

Lois Polansky—Kimonos and other garments rendered in handmade paper, a specialty of the artist. Through Dec. 3. (Milliken, 98 Prince St.)

Sigmar Polke—Abstract paintings on canvas and felt. Through Nov. 29. (Boone, 417 West Broadway.)

Jaune Quick-to-See Smith and Peter Agostino—Pastels of horses by the former and sculptures of horses in plaster, ceramic, and bronze by the latter. Through Saturday, Nov. 22. (Steinbaum, 132 Greene St.)

Ramm-Ell-Zee—Abstract symbols and geometric forms painted on short-napped rugs, sometimes with spray cans. Through Saturday, Nov. 22. (Bryers, 111 Greene St.)

George Rickey—Twenty-five sculptures dating from 1959 to this year. Through Saturday, Nov. 15. (Davidson, 415 West Broadway.)

Judith Shahn—Paintings, drawings, and prints. Through Nov. 30. (Morningstar, 164 Mercer St. Tuesdays through Fridays, 3 to 6; Saturdays and Sundays, noon to 6.)

Joel Shapiro—Bronze and wood sculptures, plus drawings—his latest work. Through Dec. 6. (Cooper, 155 Wooster St.)

Lee Tribe—Welded-steel sculptures. Through Nov. 29. (Munroe, 415 West Broadway.)

Andy Warhol—Paintings from the early sixties, based on comic-strip characters and consumer products. Through June 13. (Dia Art Foundation, 77 Wooster St. Opens at noon Wednesdays through Saturdays.) . . . ¶ Large-scale paintings from 1978. Through Dec. 24. (Gagosian, 521 W. 23rd St., near Eleventh Ave.)

Lawrence Weiner—Writing on the wall. Through Saturday, Nov. 22. (Castelli, 142 Greene St.)

Group Shows—At the DI LAURENTI, 383 West Broadway: Twenty-five Italian artists showing paintings and sculptures completed since 1956. Through Dec. 20. . . . THE DRAWING CENTER, 35 Wooster St.: Works on paper by twelve artists. Through Nov. 29. (Open Wednesday evenings until 8.)

OTHER GALLERIES

Crash—Paintings (spray paint on canvas), drawings (pencil and vinyl), and a hand-painted coffee table. Through Nov. 30. (Jus de Pomme, 338 E. 11th St. Opens at 1 Wednesdays through Sundays.)

Carol Kreeger Davidson—Freestanding abstract sculptures in canvas and paper, bronze, and aluminum. Through Nov. 30. (Humphrey, 242 E. 5th St. Opens at noon Wednesdays through Sundays.)

Rodney Alan Greenblat—Paintings and wood sculptures that have a certain folk-art aesthetic. Through Nov. 23. (Gracie Mansion Gallery, 167 Avenue A, at 10th St. Opens at 1 Wednesdays through Sundays.)

Charles Hewitt—Paintings in which figures and objects are interchangeable with landscapes. Through Nov. 30. (M-13, at 413 E. 9th St. Opens at 1 Wednesdays through Sundays.)

John McCracken—Sixty sculptures dating from 1965 to this year by a West Coast artist known for his colored planks in wood, fibre glass, and lacquer. Through Dec. 21. (P.S. 1, 46-01 21st St., Long Island City. Opens at noon Wednesdays through Sundays.)

Kurt Ossenfort / Tim Snell—Abstract paintings related, in the quality of line, the artist says, to drawings he makes with mechanical devices; one of them, operated by compressed air, is also on view. / Abstract paintings in bold colors by a Canadian artist. Through Saturday, Nov. 22. (Bond, 30 Bond St. Opens at 1.)

James Welling—Black-and-white oil paintings. Through Nov. 29. (Cash-Newhouse, 170 Avenue B, near 11th St. Opens at 1 Wednesdays through Sundays.)

Group Shows—At the ARTISTS SPACE, 223 West Broadway: Contemporary works that comment on traditional fairy tales. The artists include Louise Lawler, James Casebere, Ericka Beckman, and Vito Acconci. . . . ¶ At 11 and 2:30, a three-hour program of complementary videos ("Curlylocks and the Three Brothers," by Jacqueline Frazier; "So Where's My Prince Already," by Ardele Lister; and others) will be shown. Through Nov. 26. . . . RYAN, 452 Columbus Ave., at 81st St.: "Atelier 17"—prints by S. W. Hayter and by artists who worked with him in New York and Paris. Through Saturday, Nov. 22. (Tuesdays through Fridays, noon to 7; Saturdays, noon to 6.)

PHOTOGRAPHY

Robert Frank—Prints, including his most recent, which have been altered with collage, text, and drawing. Through Nov. 29. (Pace-MacGill, 11 E. 57th St.)

Lee Friedlander / Len Jenshel—Framed individual prints from a book of photogravures of Japanese landscapes with flowering cherry trees. / Color landscapes of Texas photographed while the artist was working with David Byrne's production of "True Stories." Through Dec. 13. (Laurence Miller, 138 Spring St.)

Vera Lehndorff and Holger Trülzsch—Very large Polaroid Polacolor prints of photographs taken in a factory in Italy where, typically, Miss Lehndorff is made to seem part of the woodwork, as it were. Through Nov. 29. (Stoler, 13 White St.)

Philip Lieberman / Carol Burch-Brown—Black-and-white prints of Swiss farmlands. / Graphite-and-ink drawings. Through Nov. 29. (Urdang, 23 E. 74th St.)

Sheila Metzner—Photographs printed with the Fresson process: the subjects include portraits for *Vogue* and *House & Garden* and still-lifes of prototypes of lamps designed by Serge Mouillé. Through Nov. 29. (Wolf, 30 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

Richard Prince—Photographs. Through Nov. 23. (International with Monument, 111 E. 7th St. Opens at noon Wednesdays through Sundays.)

Philip Trager—Photographs of Palladian villas in Northern Italy. Through Nov. 29. (Witkin, 415 West Broadway. Opens at noon on Saturdays.)

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—A large show of antiquities which illuminates life in the Holy Land from prehistoric times to the end of the Byzantine period, in the seventh century. The best preserved of the Dead Sea Scrolls, the Habakkuk Commentary; a bronze of Hadrian; Tyrian and Jewish shekels; pottery and metal objects from cities of the Canaanite period; and numerous other artifacts. . . . ¶ Drawings by French masters of the fifteenth century to the eighteenth, including recently acquired works by Boucher and Le Brun as well as works by Watteau and Fragonard. Both shows through Jan. 4. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Tuesday evenings until 8:45.)

Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St.—A survey of the paintings Morris Louis did after 1954. Through Jan. 4. . . . ¶ A retrospective of works on paper by Jean Dubuffet. Through Jan. 13. . . . ¶ Prints by Odilon Redon. Through Feb. 3. (Open daily, except Wednesdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 9.)

Guggenheim Museum, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—A show of maps, photographs, printed texts, and sculptural works by Richard Long, a British artist who documents the extensive walks he has taken in various parts of the world with various parts of the earth. Mud from the River Avon, for instance, is used to make a circle of handprints on the wall. . . . ¶ An exhibit of paintings, sculptures, photographs, and installations representing the styles of ten contemporary French artists. Both shows through Nov. 30. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 11 to 8, with no admission charge from 5 to 8; Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 5.)

Whitney Museum of American Art, Madison Ave. at 75th St.—A large retrospective of paintings and drawings by John Singer Sargent. Through Jan. 4. . . . ¶ Mary Lucier's 1983 video "Ohio at Giverny" (18½ minutes) is showing continuously in the lobby gallery through Jan. 18. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 1 to 8, with no admission charge after 6; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 5; Sundays, noon to 6.)

Brooklyn Museum, Eastern Parkway—"The Machine Age in America 1918-1941," a display of paintings, sculptures, photographs, decorative objects, and appliances that reflect the fascination the machine held for American artists and designers during the period of the great industrial leaps between the World Wars. Through Feb. 16. (Open daily except Tuesdays. Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays, 11 to 6; Sundays, 1 to 6.)

American Museum of Natural History, Central Park W. at 79th St.—A show of late-Ice Age art (which has been called "the childhood of art but not the art of children"), consisting of a hundred decorated stone, ivory, and bone objects, including the characteristic statuettes known as little Venuses. Also, a reconstruction of a hut made with mammoth bones. Through Jan. 18. (Open daily. Hours: Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays, 10 to 5:45; Wednesdays, 10 to 9; Fridays and Saturdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge after 5.)

American Craft Museum, 40 W. 53rd St.—A blazing show of handmade objects which befits the opening of a new home for the museum. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 10 to 8, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Sundays, 10 to 5.)

Asia Society, 725 Park Ave., at 70th St.—"Art of Japan," an exhibit of paintings, ceramics, scrolls, folding screens, and sculptures dating from the eighth century to the nineteenth and taken from the Mary and Jackson Burke collection. Through Dec. 7. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 6; Sundays, noon to 5.)

Grolier Club, 47 E. 60th St.—Dance notations recorded in manuscripts and first editions over the centuries—from a 1586 French book, "Orchésographie," by Thoinot Arbeau, to original manuscripts by Alwin Nikolais and Merce Cunningham. Through Nov. 29. (Open daily, except Sundays, 10 to 5.)

The New Museum, 583 Broadway—A show of

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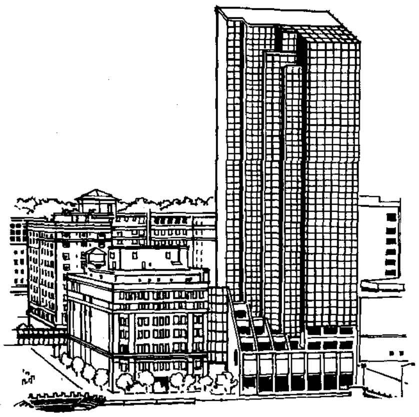

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

sculptures, photographs, and installations by fourteen European artists whose work, not known here, reflects the influences of Minimalists and Conceptualists. Through Nov. 30. (Open daily except Mondays and Tuesdays. Hours: Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays, noon to 6; Fridays, noon to 10; Saturdays, noon to 8.)

New-York Historical Society, 170 Central Park W., at 77th St.—A display of antique toys—Teddy bears and dolls, including a Shirley Temple doll; trains, including a girl's freight-train set; cars, including a knockout six-foot replica of a Packard; games, including a Newport Yacht race game, circa 1891—from the Lawrence Scripps Wilkinson Collection. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

New York Public Library, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St.—From the Berg Collection: an exhibit of letters and literary works by English and American women writers from the eighteenth century to the present. (Open daily, except Sundays and Thursdays, 10 to 6.)

ART AFTER DARK

(Performance, music, dance, video, film, and combinations thereof.)

Franklin Furnace, 112 Franklin St. 925-4671—Alastair MacLennan in "Bury the Veil," a fifty-hour-long performance (continuous) that the public can view Thursday, Nov. 13, from 4 to 8, and Friday and Saturday, Nov. 14-15, from noon to 6. . . . ¶ James Grigsby (performance), Thursday and Friday, Nov. 20-21, at 8:30.

The Kitchen, 512 W. 19th St. 255-5793—Rachel Rosenthal (performance), Thursday and Friday, Nov. 13-14, at 8:30. . . . ¶ Opening performances of a revival of the Wooster Group's theatre piece "The Road to Immortality (Route 1 & 9)," Monday through Saturday, Nov. 17-22, at 8.

P.S. 122, 150 First Ave., at 9th St. 477-5288—Mary Lyman (performance), Friday through Sunday, Nov. 14-16, at 9.

Artists' Films—Thursday, Nov. 13, at 7: Videos, including "Joseph Beuys: Every Man Is an Artist." . . . ¶ Thursday, Nov. 20, at 7: Films by Robert Rauschenberg, Lawrence Weiner, and others. (White Columns, 325 Spring St., at Greenwich St. No tickets necessary.)

MUSIC

(The box-office number for Alice Tully Hall is 362-1911; for Avery Fisher Hall 874-2424; and for Merkin Concert Hall, Abraham Goodman House, 129 W. 67th St., 362-8719. Other box-office numbers are included in the listings.)

OPERA

Metropolitan Opera—Wednesday, Nov. 12, at 7:30: "Der Rosenkavalier," with Anna Tomowa-Sintow, Barbara Hendricks, Brenda Boozer, and Romano Nieders; conducted by Jeffrey Tate. . . . ¶ Thursday, Nov. 13, at 8: "Roméo et Juliette," with Cecilia Gasdia, Alfredo Kraus, Brian Schexnayder, and Paul Plishka; Placido Domingo . . . ¶ Friday, Nov. 14, at 7:30: "I Puritani," with Joan Sutherland, Salvatore Fisichella, Sherrill Milnes, and Samuel Ramey; Richard Bonynge. (A benefit performance.) . . . ¶ Saturday, Nov. 15, at 1: "Der Rosenkavalier," with Mechthild Gessendorf, Barbara Hendricks, Brigitte Fassbaender, and Romano Nieders; Jeffrey Tate. . . . ¶ Saturday, Nov. 15, at 8: "Tosca," with Eva Marton, Ermanno Mauro, and Juan Pons; Garcia Navarro. (A nonsubscription performance.) . . . ¶ Monday, Nov. 17, at 8: "Roméo et Juliette," with Cecilia Gasdia, Alfredo Kraus, Vernon Hartman, and Paul Plishka; Placido Domingo. . . . ¶ Tuesday, Nov. 18, at 8: "I Puritani," with Joan Sutherland, Salvatore Fisichella, Sherrill Milnes, and Samuel Ramey; Richard Bonynge. . . . ¶ Wednesday, Nov. 19, at 7:30: "Der Rosenkavalier, with Anna Tomowa-Sintow, Barbara Hendricks, Brigitte Fassbaender, and Artur Korn; Jeffrey Tate. . . . ¶ Thursday, Nov. 20, at 8: "Tosca," with Eva Marton, Ermanno Mauro, and Juan Pons; Garcia Navarro. . . . ¶ Friday, Nov. 21, at 8: "Roméo et Juliette," with Cecilia Gasdia, Alfredo Kraus, Brian Schexnayder, and John Macurdy; Placido Domingo. . . . ¶ Saturday, Nov. 22, at 1:30: "Der Rosenkavalier," with Anna Tomowa-Sintow, Barbara Hendricks, Brigitte Fassbaender, and Artur Korn; Jeffrey Tate. . . . ¶ Saturday, Nov. 22, at 8: "I Puritani," with Joan Sutherland, Salvatore Fisichella, Sherrill Milnes, and Samuel Ramey; Richard Bonynge. (Metropolitan Opera House. 362-6000.)

New York City Opera—The season will conclude with performances of "Candide," conducted by Scott Bergeson. There will be three different casts. (New York State Theatre. 870-5570. Wednesday through Friday, Nov. 12-14, at 8; Saturday, Nov. 15, at 2 and 8; and Sunday, Nov. 16, at 1 and 7.)

Opera Ensemble of New York—Paul Dunkel conducting performances of the Gertrude Stein–Virgil Thomson opera, "Four Saints in Three Acts," staged by John J. D. Sheehan. (Lillie Blake School Theatre, 45 E. 81st St. Wednesdays and Fridays at 8, and Sundays at 3. Through Sunday, Nov. 30. For information about tickets, call 288-1485.)

ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

New York Philharmonic—At Avery Fisher Hall, Zubin Mehta conducting—Wednesday, Nov. 12, at 8: A varied program to benefit the Philharmonic's Pension Fund, with Kiri Te Kanawa, soprano. . . . ¶ Thursday through Saturday, Nov. 13-15, at 8: A Iannis Xenakis–Bach–Schubert program, with Roger Woodward, piano, and Paul Neubauer and Leonard Davis, viola. . . . ¶ Thursday, Nov. 20, at 8; Friday, Nov. 21, at 2; Saturday, Nov. 22, at 8; and Tuesday, Nov. 25, at 7:30: A Bach-Hindemith-Beethoven program, with Martha Argerich, piano, and the Messrs. Neubauer and Davis.

Masterplayers—Richard Schumacher conducting. (St. Peter's Church, Lexington Ave. at 54th St. Thursday, Nov. 13, at 8. For information about tickets, call 935-2200.)

Symphony Orchestra of the Curtis Institute of Music—Joseph Silverstein conducting and acting as violin soloist in an all-Beethoven program, with Abbey Simon, piano. (Alice Tully Hall. Saturday, Nov. 15, at 3.)

Sine Nomine Singers & Baroque Orchestra—Harry Saltzman directing an all-Handel program, with Julianne Baird, soprano; Jeffrey Thomas, tenor; John Ostendorf, bass; Cheryl Fuller, harp; and Walter Hilse, organ. (Merkin Concert Hall. Saturday, Nov. 15, at 7:30.)

New York Motet Choir—Stephen Sturk directing an all-Britten program. (Cathedral of St. John the Divine, Amsterdam Ave. at 112th St. 662-2133. Sunday, Nov. 16, at 3:30.)

Tokyo Women's Choir—Koh-ichi Hattori directing. (Alice Tully Hall. Saturday, Nov. 22, at 2.)

RECITALS

Sheila Schonbrun—Soprano, with assisting artists. (Merkin Concert Hall. Thursday, Nov. 13, at 8.)

Waverly Consort—At Alice Tully Hall, music of medieval Iberia. (Thursday, Nov. 13, and Saturday, Nov. 15, at 8.) . . . ¶ At Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium, music from the courts of Europe. (Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 570-3949. Friday, Nov. 14, at 8.)

Galimir String Quartet—Chamber music. (Mannes College of Music, 150 W. 85th St. Friday, Nov. 14, at 8. No tickets necessary.)

Claudio Arrau—Piano, in a Beethoven-Liszt program. (Cathedral of St. John the Divine, Amsterdam Ave. at 112th St. Saturday, Nov. 15, at 7:30. No tickets necessary.)

Judith Blegen and Håkan Hagegård—Soprano and baritone. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 427-4410. Saturday, Nov. 15, at 8, and Sunday, Nov. 16, at 3.)

Vladimir Ashkenazy—Piano. (Avery Fisher Hall. Sunday, Nov. 16, at 3.)

George Athanasiades—Organ. (St. Bartholomew's Church, Park Ave. at 51st St. Sunday, Nov. 16, at 3. Admission by contribution.)

Music Before 1800—The third in a series of concerts, this one will offer the New York première of Alessandro Stradella's serenata "Il Barcheggio," with Cheryl Bensman, soprano; Drew Minter, countertenor; Robert Kuehn, baritone; Michael Collver, cornetto; and an ensemble conducted from the harpsichord by Louise Basbas. (Corpus Christi

Church, W. 121st St., just east of Broadway. Sunday, Nov. 16, at 4. Tickets at the door on the day of the concert.)

Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center—With Barbara Hendricks, soprano, and Kenneth Cooper, harpsichord. (Alice Tully Hall. Sunday, Nov. 16, at 5, and Monday and Tuesday, Nov. 17-18, at 7:30.)

Rebecca La Brecque—Piano and synthesizer. (Merkin Concert Hall. Sunday, Nov. 16, at 8.)

The King's Singers—A vocal sextet, performing works by Peter Maxwell Davies, the Beatles, and others. (Alice Tully Hall. Sunday, Nov. 16, at 8.)

Joaquin Achucarro—Piano. (Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. 840-2824. Monday, Nov. 17, at 8.)

Judith Norell—With Wendy Young, in a program of works for solo and double harpsichord. (Merkin Concert Hall. Monday, Nov. 17, at 8.)

Arioso Trio—Russian piano trios from the turn of the century. (St. Stephen's Church, 122 W. 69th St. Monday, Nov. 17, at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

Chamber Music at the Y—The Guarneri Quartet and Leon Fleisher, piano. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 427-4410. Tuesday and Wednesday, Nov. 18-19, at 8.)

Music Spectrum—The first of three chamber-music concerts. (Merkin Concert Hall. Tuesday, Nov. 18, at 8.)

New York Women Composers, Inc.—Presenting a program of music by members of the Cincinnati Composers Guild. (St. Stephen's Church, 122 W. 69th St. Tuesday, Nov. 18, at 8. Admission by contribution.)

Mischa Maisky—Performing, over two concerts, Bach's complete suites for unaccompanied cello. (Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 570-3949. Thursday, Nov. 20, and Sunday, Nov. 23, at 8.)

Trio Musica Hispana—With German Caceres, oboe. (Center for Inter-American Relations, Park Ave. at 68th St. 249-8950. Thursday, Nov. 20, at 8.)

Fadé Camerata—Heidi Nitze, soprano; Martin Agee, violin; Christine Scafidi, cello; and John Van Buskirk, piano. (Merkin Concert Hall. Thursday, Nov. 20, at 8.)

Composers' Forum—Presenting Zeitgeist, a new-music ensemble from Minneapolis. (Greenwich House, 27 Barrow St. Thursday, Nov. 20, at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

Rafael Puyana—Harpsichord. (Vélez Blanco Patio, Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St. 570-3949. Friday, Nov. 21, at 8.)

Contemporary French Music—Three concerts of mostly American premières—Friday, Nov. 21, at 8: Alain Meunier, cello, and Alain Planes, piano, performing solos and duets. . . . ¶ Saturday, Nov. 22, at 8: Robert Black conducting the Prism Orchestra in a Boulez-Barraqué program, with Aleck Karis, piano; Christine Schadeberg and Margaret Ahrens, sopranos; and Marjorie Merrick, mezzo-soprano. . . . ¶ Sunday, Nov. 23, at 3: Elisabeth Chojnacka, harpsichord, and Sylvio Gualda, percussion, in a program that includes four works by Iannis Xenakis. (Guggenheim Museum Auditorium, Fifth Ave. at 89th St. 360-3503.)

New York New Music Ensemble—Performing works by Karlheinz Stockhausen and Peter Maxwell Davies. (St. Paul's Chapel, Columbia University, Amsterdam Ave. at 116th St. Friday, Nov. 21, at 8:30. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

Chamber Music—With Stephen Burns, trumpet; Beverly Hoch, soprano; John Van Buskirk, piano; and the Mendelssohn String Quartet. (Merkin Concert Hall. Saturday, Nov. 22, at 8.)

Benefit Concert—Evelyn Lear and Thomas Stewart, accompanied by pianist Steven Blier, performing on behalf of the Concert Artists Guild. (Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. Tuesday, Nov. 18, at 8. For information about tickets, call 333-5200.)

MISCELLANY

Philip Glass and the Philip Glass Ensemble—Presenting the concert-performance première of "Songs from Liquid Days," with Janice Pendarvis, the Roches, Bernard Fowler, Linda Ronstadt, and Paul Sperry; plus the New York première of "A Descent Into the Maelstrom." (Avery Fisher Hall. Friday, Nov. 21, at 7:30 and 10.)

SPORTS

(The box-office number for Madison Square Garden is 564-4400, for the Meadowlands 1-201 935-3900, and for Nassau Coliseum 1-516 587-9222.)

Basketball—At **byrne meadowlands arena:** Nets vs. Indiana Pacers, Thursday, Nov. 13, at 7:30, and Atlanta Hawks, Saturday, Nov. 15, at 7:30. . . . **madison square garden:** Knicks vs. Washington Bullets, Saturday, Nov. 15, at 7:30, and Golden State Warriors, Saturday, Nov. 22, at 8:30.

Football—Jets vs. Indianapolis Colts. (Giants Stadium, the Meadowlands. Sunday, Nov. 16, at 4.)

Hockey—At **madison square garden:** Rangers vs. Buffalo Sabres, Wednesday, Nov. 12, at 7:30; Philadelphia Flyers, Friday, Nov. 14, at 7:30; and Edmonton Oilers, Sunday, Nov. 16, at 8:30. . . . **byrne meadowlands arena:** Devils vs. Detroit Red Wings, Wednesday, Nov. 12, at 7:35; Pittsburgh Penguins, Friday, Nov. 14, at 7:35; and Rangers, Monday, Nov. 17, at 7:35. . . . **nassau coliseum:** Islanders vs. Toronto Maple Leafs, Thursday, Nov. 20, at 8:05, and Hartford Whalers, Saturday, Nov. 22, at 7:05.

Racing—At **aqueduct:** Daily, except Tuesdays and Wednesday, Nov. 12, at 12:30. The Remsen, Saturday, Nov. 22. . . . **meadowlands:** Weeknights at 8; through Saturday, Dec. 13.

Tennis—Virginia Slims Championships: Martina Navratilova, Hana Mandlikova, Steffi Graf, and others. (Madison Square Garden. Monday through Friday, Nov. 17-21, at 6; semifinal singles matches and final doubles match Saturday, Nov. 22, at noon; and final singles match Sunday, Nov. 23, at 2.)

ET ALIA

Poetry, Prose, and Drama Readings—Czeslaw Milosz and Louise Glück reading from their own poetry, and Leon Rooke and Susan Swan reading from their own prose. (Center for Inter-American Relations, Park Ave. at 68th St. Friday, Nov. 14, at 6. No tickets necessary; seating on a first-come, first-served basis.) . . . ¶ Yves Bonnefoy reading his own poetry, in French, with English translations read by Richard Pevear and Paul Schmidt. A discussion about translation will follow. (City University Graduate Center, third floor, 33 W. 42nd St. Saturday, Nov. 15, at 2. No tickets necessary.) . . . ¶ August Wilson and Reinaldo Povod reading from their own plays. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 427-4410. Monday, Nov. 17, at 8.) . . . ¶ Eleven writers and artists reading their own works, which are distributed by the organization known as Printed Matter, now celebrating its tenth anniversary. (Great Hall, Cooper Union, Third Ave. at 7th St. Wednesday, Nov. 19, at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the reading.)

Flower Show—The sixth annual show of Japanese chrysanthemums, including bonsai plants, in the Enid A. Haupt Conservatory at the New York Botanical Garden. (Bronx Park. Daily, except Mondays, 10 to 4; through Sunday, Nov. 30.)

Auctions—At Sotheby's, York Ave. at 72nd St. (Exhibition hours: Mondays through Saturdays, 9 to 5; Sunday, Nov. 16, from 1 to 5.)—Monday, Nov. 17, at 7: Old Master, Impressionist, and modern drawings from the collection of John R. Gaines. Admission by ticket only; for information, call 606-7303. . . . ¶ Tuesday, Nov. 18, at 10:15 and 2: African and Oceanic art. Exhibition starts Thursday, Nov. 13. . . . ¶ Tuesday, Nov. 18, at 7: Impressionist and modern paintings, drawings, and sculptures, part one. Admission by ticket only; for information, call 606-7303. Exhibition starts Thursday, Nov. 13. . . . ¶ Wednesday, Nov. 19, at 10:15: Expressionist watercolors and Impressionist and modern drawings. Exhibition starts Thursday, Nov. 13. . . . ¶ Wednesday, Nov. 19, at 2: Impressionist and modern paintings, drawings, and sculptures, part two. Exhibition starts Thursday, Nov. 13. . . . ¶ Thursday and Friday, Nov. 20-21, at 10 and 2: Prints. Exhibition starts Saturday, Nov. 15, at 1.

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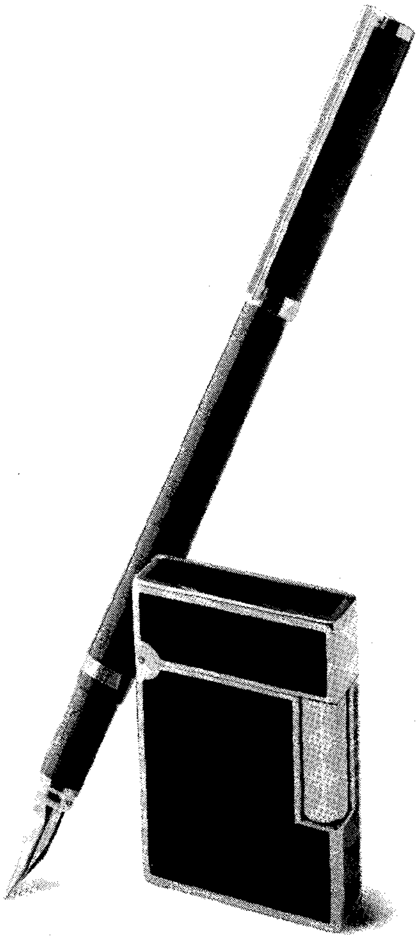

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EAST SIDE

Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171; theatre opens in the late afternoon and is closed Mondays.)
Through Nov. 13: Shown as three separate programs: "In a Jazz Way: A Portrait of Mura Dehn" and "The Spirit Moves: A History of Black Social Dance on Film 1900-86, Part 1" (directed by Mura Dehn), both documentaries; "The Spirit Moves, Parts 2, 3, and 4;" and "Mephisto" (†).
From Nov. 14: "Mephisto" (†); and "Tricheurs" (1983; Barbet Schroeder; in French), with Bulle Ogier.

Movieland 8th Street Triplex, 36 E. 8th. (477-6600)
Theatre 1: "Tai-Pan" (Daryl Duke), with Bryan Brown.
Theatre 2: "Something Wild" (†).
Theatre 3: "Half Moon Street" (Bob Swaim), with Sigourney Weaver and Michael Caine.

New Gramercy, Lexington at 23rd. (475-1660)
Through Nov. 13: "Jumpin' Jack Flash" (Penny Marshall), with Whoopi Goldberg.
From Nov. 14: "Streets of Gold" (Joe Roth), with Klaus Maria Brandauer.

Bay Cinema, 2nd Ave. at 32nd. (679-0160)
"The Color of Money" (†).

Loews 34th Street Showplace, 238 E. 34th. (532-5544)
Theatre 1: "Soul Man" (Steve Miner), with C. Thomas Howell and Rae Dawn Chong.
Theatre 2: "Crocodile Dundee" (Peter Faiman), with Paul Hogan.
Theatre 3: "Peggy Sue Got Married" (†).

34th St. East, 241 E. 34th. (683-0255)
"Something Wild" (†).

Eastside Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 55th. (755-3020)
"Stand By Me" (†).

Sutton, 3rd Ave. at 57th. (759-1411)
"True Stories" (†).

Gotham Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 58th. (759-2262)
Through Nov. 13: "Jumpin' Jack Flash" (Penny Marshall), with Whoopi Goldberg.
From Nov. 14: To be announced.

Plaza, 42 E. 58th. (355-3320)
"Round Midnight" (Bertrand Tavernier), with Dexter Gordon.

Manhattan 1 and 2, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (935-6420)
Theatre 1: "Tai-Pan" (Daryl Duke), with Bryan Brown.
Theatre 2: "Tough Guys" (Jeff Kanew), with Burt Lancaster and Kirk Douglas.

Baronet and Coronet, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)
Theatre 1: "Something Wild" (†).
Theatre 2: "The Color of Money" (†).

D. W. Griffith, 235 E. 59th. (759-4630)
"Blue Velvet" (†).

Cinema I and II, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (753-6022/0774)
Theatre 1: "The Mission" (Roland Joffé), with Robert De Niro and Jeremy Irons.
Theatre 2: "Betty Blue" (Jean-Jacques Beineix; in French), with Jean-Hugues Anglade and Béatrice Dalle.

Gemini 1 and 2, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-1670)
Theatre 1: "Peggy Sue Got Married" (†).
Theatre 2: "52 Pick-Up" (John Frankenheimer), with Roy Scheider and Ann-Margret.

Beekman, 2nd Ave. at 66th. (737-2622)
Through Nov. 13: "The Name of the Rose" (Jean-Jacques Annaud), with Sean Connery and F. Murray Abraham.
From Nov. 14: "Every Time We Say Goodbye" (Moshe Mizrahi), with Tom Hanks.

Loews New York Twin, 2nd Ave. at 67th. (744-7339)
Theatre 1: "Half Moon Street" (Bob Swaim), with Sigourney Weaver and Michael Caine.
Theatre 2: "Nobody's Fool" (Evelyn Purcell), with Rosanna Arquette and Eric Roberts.

68th St. Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 68th. (734-0302)
"Rouge Baiser" (Vera Belmont; in French), with Charlotte Valandrey.

Loews Tower East, 3rd Ave. at 71st. (879-1313)
"Children of a Lesser God" (Randa Haines), with William Hurt and Marlee Matlin.

U.A. East, 1st Ave. at 85th. (249-5100)
"52 Pick-Up" (John Frankenheimer), with Roy Scheider and Ann-Margret.

R.K.O. 86th St. Twin, Lexington at 86th. (289-8900)
Theatre 1: Through Nov. 13: "Quiet Cool" (Clay Borris), with James Remar. From Nov. 14: "Neon Maniacs."
Theatre 2: "Tai-Pan" (Daryl Duke), with Bryan Brown.

Loews Orpheum 1 and 2, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (289-4607)
Theatre 1: "Soul Man" (Steve Miner), with C. Thomas Howell and Rae Dawn Chong.
Theatre 2: "Crocodile Dundee" (Peter Faiman), with Paul Hogan.

86th St. East, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (249-1144)
Through Nov. 13: "Jumpin' Jack Flash" (Penny Marshall), with Whoopi Goldberg.
From Nov. 14: "Streets of Gold" (Joe Roth), with Klaus Maria Brandauer.

WEST SIDE

Film Forum 1 and 2, 57 Watts St. (431-1590; Mondays through Fridays, theatre opens in the late afternoon.)
Theatre 1: Through Nov. 18: "Dead End Kids: A Story of Nuclear Power" (directed by JoAnne Akalaitis), with Mabou Mines. From Nov. 19: "Eyes on the Prize: America's Civil Rights Years, 1954-65," six one-hour documentaries, shown as two programs.
Theatre 2: Through Nov. 13: "Dust" (Marion Hansel), with Jane Birkin and Trevor Howard. From Nov. 14: "The Fly" (1958 †) and "The Hustler" (†).

Bleecker St. Cinema 1 and 2, 144 Bleecker St. (674-2560)
Theatre 1: "Summer" (Eric Rohmer; in French), with Marie Rivière.
Theatre 2: "My Beautiful Laundrette" (†).

Waverly 1 and 2, 6th Ave. at 3rd. (929-8037)
Theatre 1: "Blue Velvet" (†).
Theatre 2: "The Name of the Rose" (Jean-Jacques Annaud), with Sean Connery and F. Murray Abraham.

8th St. Playhouse, 52 W. 8th. (674-6515; Mondays through Fridays, theatre opens in the late afternoon.)
"True Stories" (†).

R.K.O. Art Greenwich Twin, Greenwich Ave. at 12th. (929-3350)
Theatre 1: "Nobody's Fool" (Evelyn Purcell), with Rosanna Arquette and Eric Roberts.
Theatre 2: "Round Midnight" (Bertrand Tavernier), with Dexter Gordon.

Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th. (255-8800)
Theatre 1: Through Nov. 13: "That's Life!" (Blake Edwards), with Jack Lemmon and Julie Andrews. From Nov. 14: "Down by Law" (†).
Theatre 2: "She's Gotta Have It" (†).
Theatre 3: Through Nov. 13: "Matter of Heart" (Mark Whitney), a documentary about Carl Jung. From Nov. 14: "A Room with a View" (†).
Theatre 4: "52 Pick-Up" (John Frankenheimer), with Roy Scheider and Ann-Margret.

23rd St. West Triplex, 333 W. 23rd. (989-0060)
Theatre 1: "The Color of Money" (†).
Theatre 2: "Tough Guys" (Jeff Kanew), with Burt Lancaster and Kirk Douglas.
Theatre 3: "Stand By Me" (†).

Guild, 33 W. 50th. (757-2406)
Through Nov. 20: "That's Life!" (Blake Edwards), with Jack Lemmon and Julie Andrews.
From Nov. 21: "Song of the South" (†).

Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th. (765-7600)
"Tough Guys" (Jeff Kanew), with Burt Lancaster and Kirk Douglas.

57th St. Playhouse, 110 W. 57th. (581-7360)
"Sid and Nancy" (Alex Cox), with Gary Oldman and Chloe Webb.

New Carnegie, 225 W. 57th. (582-4582)
"The Name of the Rose" (Jean-Jacques Annaud), with Sean Connery and F. Murray Abraham.

Paris, 4 W. 58th. (688-2013)
Through Nov. 13: "A Room with a View" (†).
From Nov. 14: "The Decline of the American Empire" (Denys Arcand; a Canadian film, in French), with Dominique Michel.

Cinema 3, 2 W. 59th. (752-5959)
"Marlene" (Maximilian Schell), a documentary.

Loews Paramount, B'way at 61st. (247-5070)
"Children of a Lesser God" (Randa Haines), with William Hurt and Marlee Matlin.

Lincoln Plaza 1, 2, and 3, B'way at 63rd. (757-2280)
Theatre 1: "The Sacrifice" (Andrei Tarkovsky; in Swedish), with Erland Josephson.
Theatre 2: Through Nov. 20: "Police" (Maurice Pialat; in French), with Gérard Depardieu. From Nov. 21: "Down by Law" (†).
Theatre 3: "Men . . ." (†).

Cinema Studio 1 and 2, B'way at 66th. (877-4040)
Theatre 1: "Ménage" (Bertrand Blier; in French), with Gérard Depardieu, Michel Blanc, and Miou-Miou.
Theatre 2: Through Nov. 20: "Down by Law" (†). From Nov. 21: "Tangos; The Exile of Gardel" (Fernando E. Solanas; in French and Spanish).

Embassy 72nd St. 1 and 2, B'way at 72nd. (724-6745)
Theatre 1: "The Color of Money" (†).
Theatre 2: Through Nov. 13: "Happily Ever After" (Bruno Barreto; a Brazilian film, in Portuguese). From Nov. 14: "A Room with a View" (†).

Loews 84th Street Sixplex, B'way at 84th. (877-3600)
Theatre 1: "Crocodile Dundee" (Peter Faiman) with Paul Hogan.
Theatre 2: "Half Moon Street" (Bob Swaim), with Sigourney Weaver and Michael Caine.
Theatre 3: "Peggy Sue Got Married" (†).
Theatre 4: "Something Wild" (†).
Theatre 5: "Soul Man" (Steve Miner), with C. Thomas Howell and Rae Dawn Chong.
Theatre 6: Through Nov. 13: "Nobody's Fool" (Evelyn Purcell), with Rosanna Arquette and Eric Roberts. From Nov. 14: "Streets of Gold" (Joe Roth), with Klaus Maria Brandauer.

Metro Cinema 1 and 2, B'way at 99th. (222-1200)
Theatre 1: "True Stories" (†).
Theatre 2: "Blue Velvet" (†).

Olympia Quad, B'way at 107th. (865-8128)
Theatre 1: Through Nov. 20: "52 Pick-Up" (John Frankenheimer), with Roy Scheider and Ann-Margret. From Nov. 21: "Song of the South" (†).
Theatre 2: "She's Gotta Have It" (†).
Theatre 3: "Stand By Me" (†).
Theatre 4: Through Nov. 13: "Tai-Pan"

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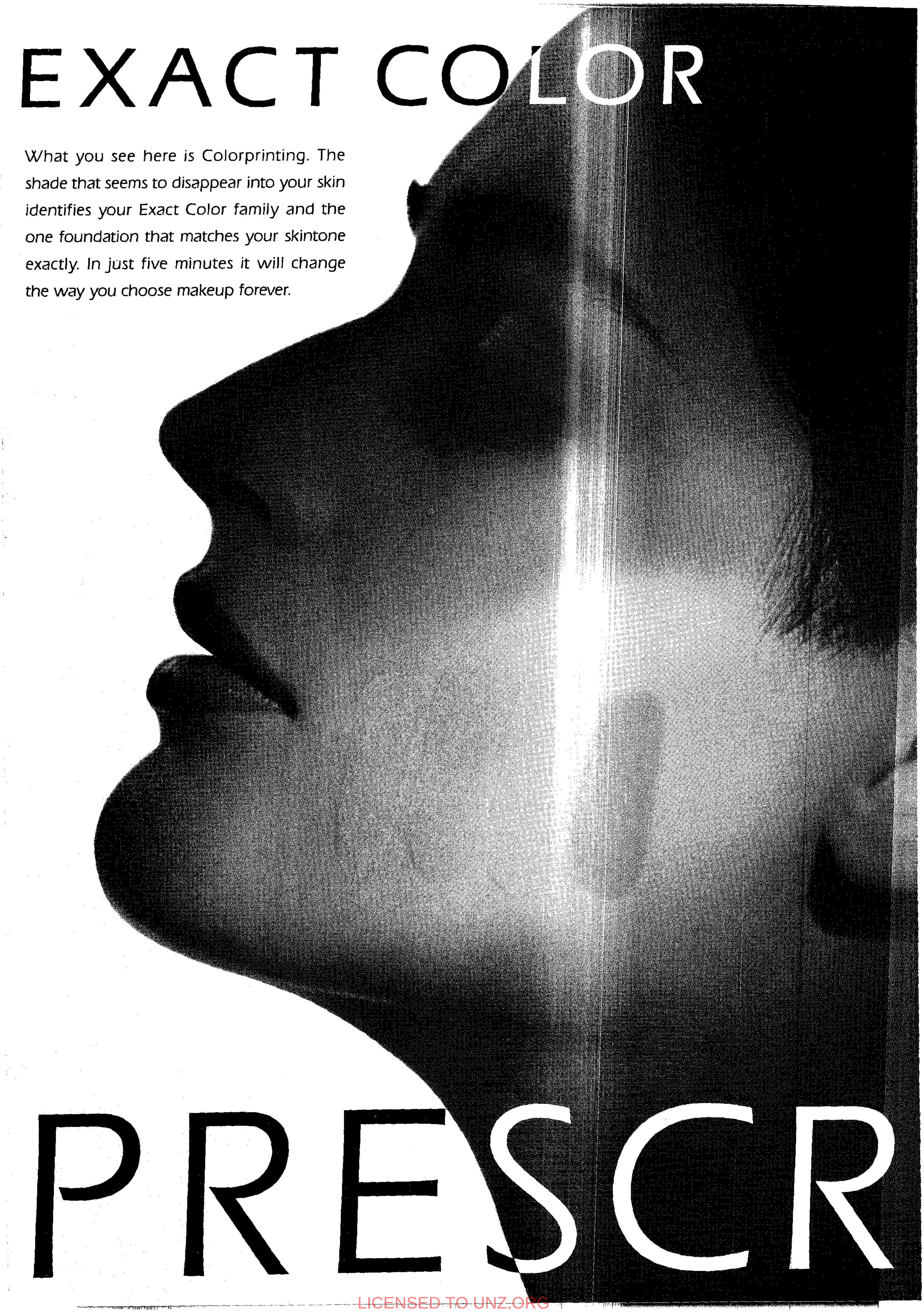

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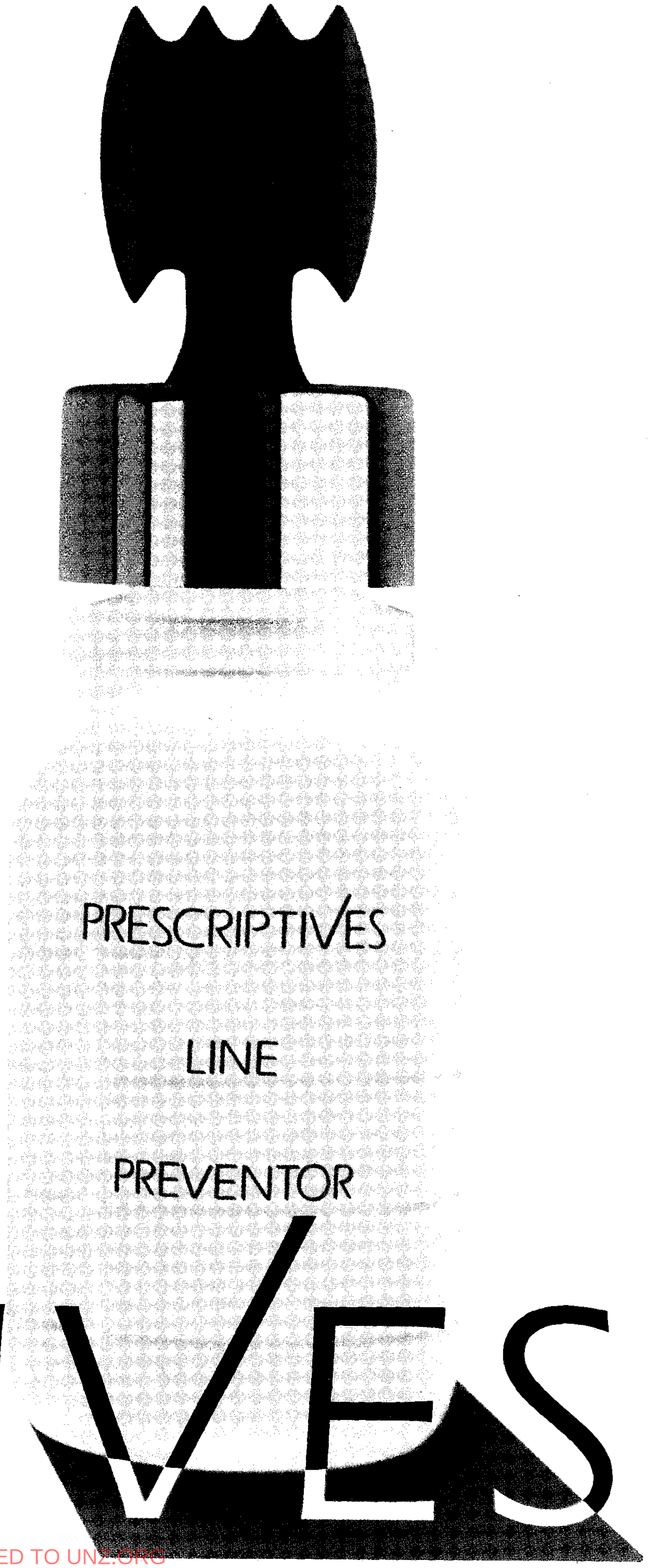

IPTIVES

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We had come to Singapore to investigate some of the mysteries of the East and we were certainly not to be disappointed.

For just a trishaw-ride away from our hotel, which, incidentally, we found to be one of the finest in the colonial world, we encountered bazaars of the most modern standard, teeming with the spoils and riches of the Orient.

Items, both mechanical and exotic, anything from snakeskin shoes and silken saris to the most advanced technological apparatus available in our own land, most at prices that seemed to us a delightful absurdity.

Another pleasant surprise was the diversity of culinary fare: foods ranging from the spiciest of Indian curries to succulent seafood and tropical fruits of the most exotic type.

Surprising, too, was the fact that because of its multi-racial populace, Singapore offers all the cultural attractions of a hundred different festivals, rituals and ceremonies almost every day of the year. Furthermore, we were but hours away from such marvels as the blowpipe hunters of Sarawak, the majestic volcanoes of Java and the strange rites of the Balinese temples, which we were to experience in days to come.

All in all, it was a series of adventures too numerous to record here. What may be recorded, however, is the delight felt

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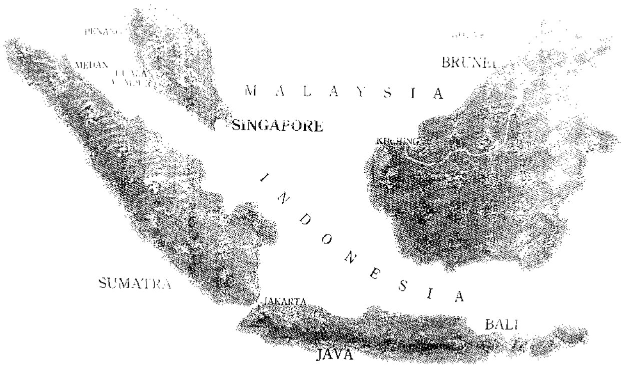

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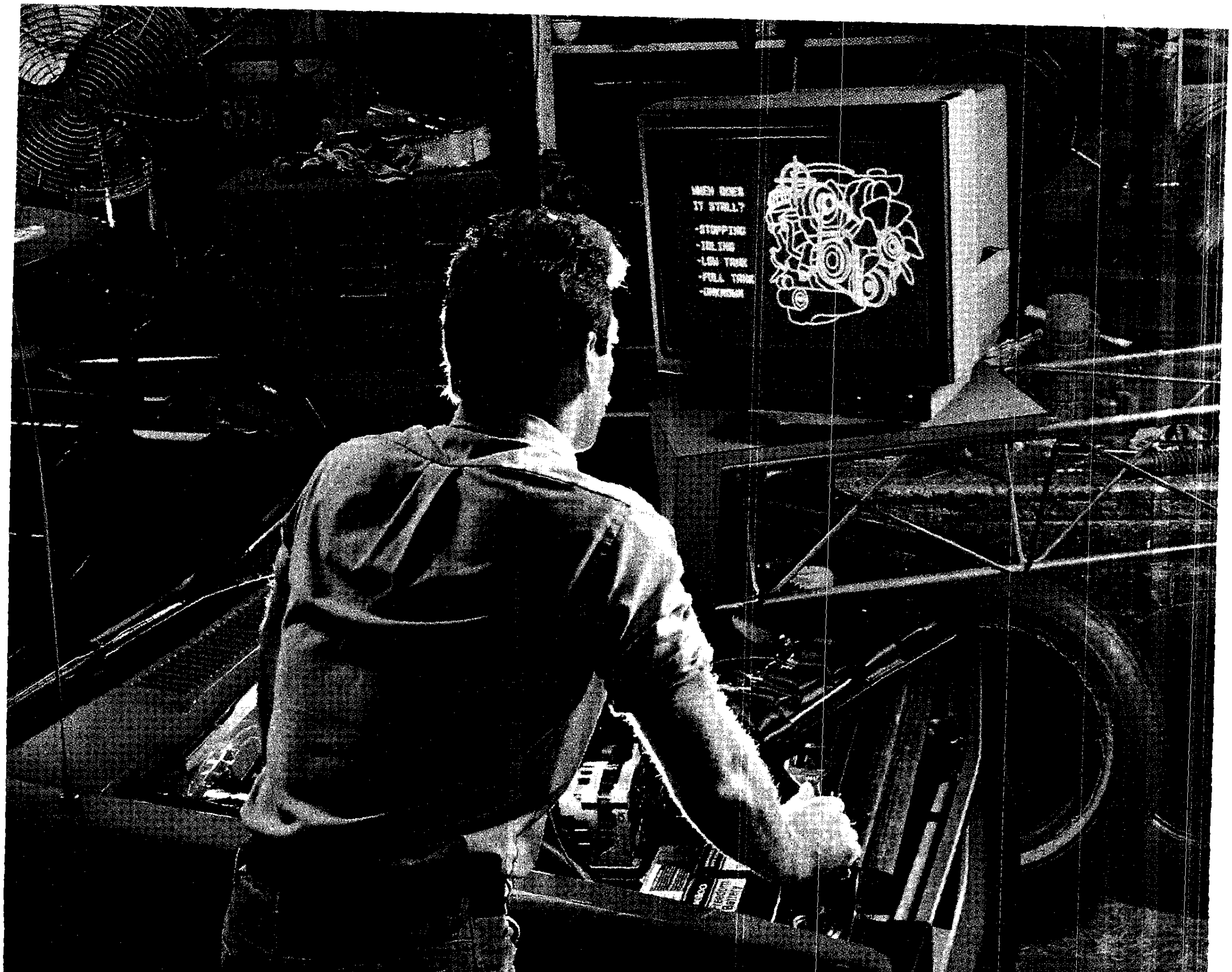

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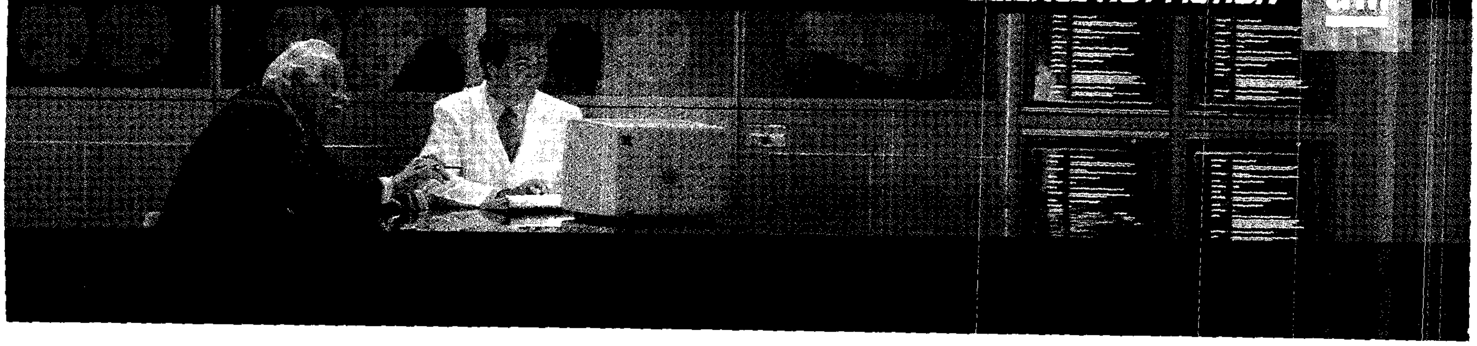

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(Daryl Duke), with Bryan Brown. Nov. 14–20: "Neon Maniacs." From Nov. 21: "Firewalker" (J. Lee Thompson), with Chuck Norris and Lou Gossett.

TIMES SQUARE AREA

Criterion Center, B'way at 44th. (354-0900)
Theatre 1: "Aliens" (†) and "The Fly" (1986 †).
Theatre 2: "Tai-Pan" (directed by Daryl Duke), with Bryan Brown.
Theatre 3: "Blue Velvet" (†).
Theatre 4: "She's Gotta Have It" (†).
Theatre 5: Through Nov. 13: "Vendetta." From Nov. 14: "Streets of Gold" (Joe Roth), with Klaus Maria Brandauer.
Theatre 6: Through Nov. 13: "Deadly Friend" (Wes Craven). From Nov. 14: To be announced.

Embassy 1, B'way at 46th. (757-2408)
"The Color of Money" (†).

Embassy 2, 3, and 4, Seventh Ave. at 47th. (730-7262)
Theatre 2: "Top Gun" (†).
Theatre 3: "From Beyond" (Stuart Gordon).
Theatre 4: "Stand By Me" (†).

Loews Astor Plaza, 44th St. at B'way. (869-8340)
"Crocodile Dundee" (Peter Faiman), with Paul Hogan.

Loews State 1 and 2, B'way at 45th. (575-5060)
Theatre 1: "Soul Man" (Steve Miner), with C. Thomas Howell and Rae Dawn Chong.
Theatre 2: "Quiet Cool" (Clay Borris), with James Remar.

New Embassy 49th Street, 49th St. near Seventh Ave. (757-7003)
"Ruthless People" (†). No performances Wednesday, Nov. 12, and Tuesday, Nov. 18.

R.K.O. National Twin, B'way at 44th. (869-0950)
Theatre 1: "Jumpin' Jack Flash" (Penny Marshall), with Whoopi Goldberg.
Theatre 2: "Peggy Sue Got Married" (†).

R.K.O. Warner Twin, B'way at 47th. (315-8425)
Theatre 1: Through Nov. 13: "Half Moon Street" (Bob Swaim), with Sigourney Weaver and Michael Caine. From Nov. 14: To be announced.
Theatre 2: Through Nov. 13: "Trick or Treat" (Charles Martin Smith), with Marc Price and Tony Fields. From Nov. 14: "Neon Maniacs."

U.A. Twin 1 and 2, B'way at 49th. (247-1635)
Theatre 1: "Something Wild" (†).
Theatre 2: "52 Pick-Up" (John Frankenheimer), with Roy Scheider and Ann-Margret.

REVIVAL HOUSES

Cinema Village, 22 E. 12th. (924-3363)
Through Nov. 13: "Salvador" (1986; directed by Oliver Stone), with James Woods; and "Under Fire" (1983; Roger Spottiswoode), with Nick Nolte, Gene Hackman, and Joanna Cassidy.
Nov. 14-15: "The King of Comedy" (1983; Martin Scorsese) with Robert De Niro and Jerry Lewis; and "Falling in Love" (1984; Ulu Grosbard), with Robert De Niro and Meryl Streep.
Nov. 16-18: "Broadway Danny Rose" (†); and "Play It Again, Sam" (1972; Herbert Ross), with Woody Allen.
Nov. 19-20: "The Trip to Bountiful" (1985; Peter Masterson), with Geraldine Page, John Heard, Carlin Glynn, and Rebecca DeMornay; and "To Kill a Mockingbird" (1962; Robert Mulligan), with Gregory Peck, Mary Badham, Phillip Alford, and John Megna.
Nov. 21-22: "Baby, It's You" (1983; John Sayles), with Rosanna Arquette and Vincent Spano; and "Next Stop, Greenwich Village" (1976; Paul Mazursky), with Shelley Winters, Lenny Baker, Ellen Greene, Christopher Walken, and Antonio Fargas.

Regency, B'way at 67th. (724-3700)
Nov. 12: "In the Heat of the Night" (1967; Norman Jewison), with Sidney Poitier and Rod Steiger; and "48 Hrs." (1982; Walter Hill), with Nick Nolte and Eddie Murphy.
Nov. 13-15: "Laura" (1944; Otto Preminger), with Gene Tierney, Clifton Webb, Vincent Price, Dana Andrews, and Judith Anderson; and "The Maltese Falcon" (1941; John Huston), with Mary Astor, Humphrey Bogart, Sydney Greenstreet, Elisha Cook, Jr., and Peter Lorre.
Nov. 16-17: "The Private Life of Henry VIII" (1933; Alexander Korda), with Charles Laughton, Merle Oberon, Binnie Barnes, Wendy Barrie, and Elsa Lanchester; and "Knight Without Armor" (†).
Nov. 18-19: "The Man Who Could Work Miracles" (†) and "Things to Come" (†).
Nov. 20-22: "The Thief of Bagdad" (1940 †); and "Four Feathers" (1939; Zoltán Korda), with Ralph Richardson, John Clements, and C. Aubrey Smith.

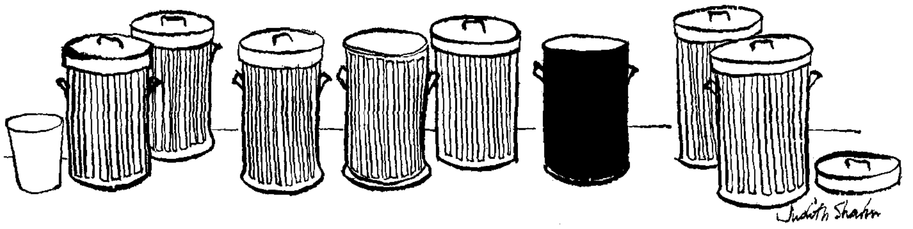
Thalia, B'way at 95th. (222-3370)
Nov. 12: "Glen or Glenda" (1952; Edward D. Wood), with Bela Lugosi; "Child Bride" (1934); and "Maniac" (1981; William Lustig), with Joe Spinell and Caroline Munro.
Nov. 13: "Chinatown" (1974; Roman Polanski), with Jack Nicholson, Faye Dunaway, and John Huston; and "The Postman Always Rings Twice" (1981; Bob Rafelson), with Jack Nicholson and Jessica Lange.
Nov. 14: "The Conformist" (1970; Bernardo Bertolucci; in Italian), with Jean-Louis Trintignant, Stefania Sandrelli, and Dominique Sanda; and "Time of Indifference" (1965; Francesco Maselli), with Rod Steiger, Claudia Cardinale, and Shelley Winters.
Nov. 15: "Kaos" (1986; Paolo and Vittorio Taviani; in Italian); and "The Night of the Shooting Stars" (1982; Paolo and Vittorio Taviani; in Italian), with Omera Antonutti.
Nov. 16: "The Tall Blond Man with One Black Shoe" (1973; Yves Robert; in French), with Pierre Richard; and "The Sheep Has Five Legs" (1955; Henri Verneuil; in French), with Fernandel.
Nov. 17: "Passport to Pimlico" (†); "Hue and Cry" (1947; Charles Crichton), with Alastair Sim, Jack Warner, and Valerie White; and "Escapade" (1955; Philip Leacock), with Alastair Sim, John Mills, and Yvonne Mitchell.
Nov. 18: "Eva" (†); and "The Doctors" (1956; Ralph Habib; in French), with Raymond Pellegrin and Jeanne Moreau.
Nov. 19: "He Walked by Night" (1949; Alfred Werker), with Richard Basehart and Scott Brady; and "Killer Bait" ("Too Late for Tears;" 1949; Byron Haskin), with Lizabeth Scott, Don Defore, Arthur Kennedy, and Dan Duryea.
Nov. 20: "Carnal Knowledge" (1971; Mike Nichols), with Jack Nicholson, Arthur Garfunkel, Candice Bergen, and Ann-Margret; and "The Last Tycoon" (1976; Elia Kazan), with Robert De Niro, Tony Curtis, Robert Mitchum, Jeanne Moreau, Jack Nicholson, and Donald Pleasence.
Nov. 21-22: "Death in Venice" (1971; Luchino Visconti), with Dirk Bogarde; and "The Damned" (1969; Luchino Visconti), with Dirk Bogarde, Ingrid Thulin, and Helmut Berger.

Thalia SoHo, 15 Vandam St. (675-0498)
Nov. 12: "Billy Budd" (1962; Peter Ustinov), with Robert Ryan, Melvyn Douglas, Terence Stamp, and Ustinov himself; and "Bartleby" (1970; Anthony Friedman), with Paul Scofield and John McEnery.
Nov. 13: "Frantic" ("Elevator to the Gallows;" 1957; Louis Malle; in French), with Jeanne Moreau; and "The Lovers" (1959; Louis Malle; in French), with Jeanne Moreau.
Nov. 14-15: "Life of Brian" (1979; Terry Jones), with Graham Chapman; and "Totally Twisted Tales."
Nov. 16: "Ernesto" (1979; Salvatore Samperi; in Italian), with Martin Halm; and "Heart and Soul" (1948; Duilio Coletti and Vittorio De Sica; in Italian), with De Sica.
Nov. 17-18: "Breathless" (1959; Jean-Luc Godard; in French), with Jean Seberg and Jean-Paul Belmondo; and "Made in U.S.A." (1967; Jean-Luc Godard; in French), with Anna Karina.
Nov. 19: "Parlor, Bedroom and Bath" (1931; Edward Sedgwick), with Buster Keaton; and "The Three Ages" (†).
Nov. 20: "Alexander Nevsky" (†) and "The Overcoat" (1962 †).
Nov. 21-22: "Local Hero" (1983; Bill Forsyth), with Peter Riegert, Denis Lawson, Fulton MacKay, and Burt Lancaster; and "The Little Kidnappers" (†).

Theatre 80 St. Marks, 80 St. Marks Pl. (254-7400)
Nov. 12: "Affair in Trinidad" (1952; Vincent Sherman), with Rita Hayworth and Glenn Ford; and "The Lady in Question" (1940; Charles Vidor), with Rita Hayworth and Brian Aherne.
Nov. 13: "Theodora Goes Wild" (1936; Richard Boleslavsky), with Irene Dunne and Melvyn Douglas; and "She Married Her Boss" (1935; Gregory La Cava), with Claudette Colbert, Melvyn Douglas, and Edith Fellows.
Nov. 14-15: "The Philadelphia Story" (1940; George Cukor), with Katharine Hepburn, James Stewart, Cary Grant, and Ruth Hussey; and "Bringing Up Baby" (1938; Howard Hawks), with Katharine Hepburn, Cary Grant, and Charles Ruggles.
Nov. 16-17: "Band of Outsiders" (1964; Jean-Luc Godard; in French), with Anna Karina, Sami Frey, and Claude Brasseur; and "Breathless" (1959; Jean-Luc Godard; in French), with Jean Seberg and Jean-Paul Belmondo.
Nov. 18: "The Last Picture Show" (1971; Peter Bogdanovich), with Timothy Bottoms, Jeff Bridges, Cybill Shepherd, Ben Johnson, and Cloris Leachman; and "Nickelodeon" (1976; Peter Bogdanovich), with Ryan O'Neal, Burt Reynolds, Tatum O'Neal, and Brian Keith.
Nov. 19: "Titanic" (†) and "Lifeboat" (†).
Nov. 20: "The Magic Flute" (1975; Ingmar Bergman; in Swedish); and "Smiles of a Summer Night" (1955; Ingmar Bergman; in Swedish), with Ulla Jacobsson, Eva Dahlbeck, Gunnar Björnstrand, Jarl Kulle, and Harriet Andersson.
Nov. 21-22: "Song of the Thin Man" (1947; Edward Buzzell) and "Another Thin Man" (1939; W. S. Van Dyke), both films with Myrna Loy and William Powell.

FILM LIBRARIES, ETC.

Museum of Modern Art, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9490; a limited number of tickets are available to those applying for them in person at the museum after 11 on the day of the showing.)
Theatre 1: Nov. 13 at 2:30 and 6: "Triumph of the Will" (1935; directed by Leni Riefenstahl; in German, with no English subtitles). . . . ¶ Nov. 14 at 2:30: "The Wicked Lady" (1945; Leslie Arliss), with Margaret Lockwood, James Mason, Patricia Roc, and Griffith Jones. . . . ¶ Nov. 14 at 6: "The Man in Grey" (1943; Leslie Arliss), with Margaret Lockwood, Phyllis Calvert, James Mason, and Stewart Granger. . . . ¶ Nov. 15 at 2: "Brief Ecstasy" (1937; Edmond T. Greville), with Paul Lukas, Hugh Williams, and Marie Ney. . . . ¶ Nov. 15 at 5:



"Strange Boarders" (1939; Herbert Mason), with Tom Walls, Renée Saint-Cyr, and Googie Withers. . . . ¶ Nov. 16 at 2: "The Man Who Knew Too Much" (1934; Alfred Hitchcock), with Leslie Banks, Edna Best, Peter Lorre, and Nova Pilbeam. . . . ¶ Nov. 16 at 5: "The Lady Vanishes" (1938; Alfred Hitchcock), with Margaret Lockwood, Michael Redgrave, Paul Lukas, and Dame May Whitty. . . . ¶ Nov. 17 at 6: "Mikey and Nicky" (1976; Elaine May), with Peter Falk, John Cassavetes, Ned Beatty, and William Hickey. . . . ¶ Nov. 18 at 2:30: "A Matter of Life and Death" ("Stairway to Heaven;" 1946; Michael Powell and Emeric Pressburger), with David Niven, Roger Livesey, Kim Hunter, and Raymond Massey. . . . ¶ Nov. 18 at 6: "A Canterbury Tale" (1944; Michael Powell and Emeric Pressburger), with Eric Portman, Sheila Sim, and Dennis Price. . . . ¶ Nov. 20 at 2:30 and 6: "Captain Blood" (1935; Michael Curtiz), with Errol Flynn, Olivia de Havilland, and Basil Rathbone. . . . ¶ Nov. 21 at 2:30: "At the Villa Rose" (1920; Maurice Elvey; a British silent film), with Manora Thew. . . . ¶ Nov. 21 at 6: "Trapped by the Mormons" (1922; H. B. Parkinson; a British silent film), with Evelyn Brent. . . . ¶ Nov. 22 at 2: "They Drive by Night" (1938; Arthur Woods), with Emlyn Williams and Ernest Thesiger. . . . ¶ Nov. 22 at 5: "The Arsenal Stadium Mystery" (1939; Thorold Dickinson), with Leslie Banks and Greta Gynt.

THEATRE 2: Nov. 13 at 3 and 6:30: "The River" (1937; Pare Lorentz) and "The Spanish Earth" (1937; Joris Ivens), both with music by Virgil Thomson. . . . ¶ Nov. 14 at 3: "40 Square Meters of Germany" (1986; Tefvik Başer; in Turkish and German, with English subtitles). . . . ¶ Nov. 14 at 6:30: "The Rose King" (1986; Werner Schroeter; in several languages, with no English subtitles). . . . ¶ Nov. 15 at 2:30: "The Invincible" (1985; Gustáv Hámos; in German, with English subtitles). . . . ¶ Nov. 15 at 5:30: "40 Square Meters of Germany." . . . ¶ Nov. 16 at 2:30: "Film Before Film" (1985; Werner Nekes), a German documentary, with English narration. . . . ¶ Nov. 16 at 5:30: "The Rose King." . . . ¶ Nov. 17 at 2:30: "The Invincible." . . . ¶ Nov. 17 at 6:30: A program of films by Abraham Ravett, who will be present. . . . ¶ Nov. 18 at 3: "Heal Hitler!" (1986; Herbert Achternbusch; in German, with English subtitles). . . . ¶ Nov. 18 at 6:30: "A Virus Respects No Morals" (1985; Rosa von Praunheim; in German, with English subtitles). . . . ¶ Nov. 20 at 3 and 6:30: A program of recent award-winning films from the International Documentary Association. . . . ¶ Nov. 21 at 3: "With One Eye on the Money" (1983; Helga Reidemeister; in German, with English subtitles), a documentary. . . . ¶ Nov. 21 at 6:30: "Film Before Film." . . . ¶ Nov. 22 at 2:30: "Noisy Martha" (1985; Pia Frankenberg; in German, with English subtitles), with Frankenberg. . . . ¶ Nov. 22 at 5:30: "The Wolf Girl" (1985; Dagmar Beiersdorf; in German, with English subtitles).

Whitney Museum, Madison Ave. at 75th St. (570-0537)—Two documentaries by Trinh T. Minh-ha—"Reassemblage" (1982), shown Tuesdays at 6:30, Wednesdays through Saturdays at noon, and Sundays at 1; and "Naked Spaces: Living Is Round" (1985), shown Tuesdays at 2, Wednesdays through Saturdays at 2:30, and Sundays at 3:30. Closed Mondays.

French Films—At the **GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM,** Fifth Ave. at 89th St. (360-3503): Nov. 12 at 6: "La Part des Choses" (1983; Bernard Dartigues). . . . ¶ Nov. 13 at 6: "L'Argent" (1983; Robert Bresson). . . . ¶ Nov. 14 at 6: "Mélo" (1986; Alain Resnais). . . . ¶ Nov. 15 at 1: "L'Hypothèse du Tableau Volé" (1979; Raoul Ruyz). . . . ¶ Nov. 16 at 1: "Les Enfants" (1985; Marguerite Duras). All films in French, with English subtitles. . . . **FRENCH INSTITUTE/ALLIANCE FRANÇAISE,** 22 E. 60th St. (355-6100): A program of seven recent feature films and seven recent short films made by French independent filmmakers. Nov. 12-14 at 1, 3, 6, and 8:45; and Nov. 15 at 1, 3:45, and 6. All films in French, with English subtitles.

IN BRIEF

SEE ABOVE FOR THEATRE ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS.
IF A MOVIE HAS BEEN REVIEWED IN THESE PAGES DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS, THE DATE OF ITS REVIEW IS GIVEN.

Alexander Nevsky (1938)—Sergei Eisenstein's ponderously surging epic has a famous score by Prokofiev and a stunning battle on ice. When it's great, it's very great, but there are long deadly stretches. The plot has something to do with the thirteenth-century invasion of Russia by German knights; needless to say, the Russians expel the invaders. With Nikolai Cherkassov as Prince Nevsky. In Russian. (Thalia SoHo; Nov. 20.)

Aliens—An inflated sci-fi action-horror film, this sequel to Ridley Scott's 1979 "Alien" is really a combat film set in the future, in space. The writer-director James Cameron pits a platoon of United States Marines (ethnically assorted, of course) against a family of extraterrestrial monsters—a queen and her slimy brood. He does it with an action director's gusto, and a shortage of imagination. As Warrant Officer Ripley, the only human survivor of the spaceship that voyaged forth in the earlier picture, Sigourney Weaver seems to take over by natural authority and her strength as an actress. She gives the movie a *presence*. But at two hours and seventeen minutes this is just a very big "Boo!" movie, with bum dialogue. With Michael Biehn, Paul Reiser, Lance Henriksen, Jenette Goldstein, and Carrie Henn. (Reviewed in our issue of 8/11/86.) (Criterion Center.)

Blue Velvet—Written and directed by David Lynch, this is possibly the only coming-of-age movie in which sex has the danger and the heightened excitement of a horror picture. The film is consciously purplish and consciously funny, and the two work together in an original, down-home way. The setting is an archetypal small, sleepy city in an indefinite mythic present that feels like the past, and Kyle MacLachlan is Jeffrey, the clean-cut young man who's scared of his dirty thoughts (but wants to have them anyway). He commutes between the blue lady of the night (Isabella Rossellini, who's a dream of a freak) and the sunshine girl he loves (Laura Dern). The movie has so much aural-visual humor and poetry that it's sustained despite the wobbly plot and other weaknesses. With Dennis Hopper, who gives the movie a jolt of horrific energy, and Dean Stockwell, who is a smiling wonder as Ben the sandman. Also with Hope Lange, Priscilla Pointer, Brad Dourif, and Jack Nance. (9/22/86) (D. W. Griffith, Waverly, Metro Cinema, and Criterion Center.)

Broadway Danny Rose (1984)—Danny Rose is a small-time booking agent who nurtures his more promising clients until they're on the brink of stardom, at which point they invariably leave him and sign up with big-time agents. Woody Allen, who plays Danny and who also wrote and directed this Damon Runyonesque movie, isn't working with post-Freudian comedy here; he has left out the hostility that made him famous, and the imagination and freak lyricism, too. Danny is a Chaplinesque moral presence in a world of Catskills comics and Mafia hoods. The picture has a curdled, Diane Arbus bleakness, but it also has some good fast talk and some push. With Nick Apollo Forte and Mia Farrow. (Cinema Village; Nov. 16-18.)

The Color of Money—This Martin Scorsese film takes up Paul Newman as Fast Eddie Felson twenty-five years after the close of the 1961 Robert Rossen film "The Hustler" (see below), in which Eddie, the new poolroom champion, quit the game rather than spoil it by truckling to the crooked manager who had staked him. Now he's a silver-haired Chicago liquor salesman who drives a white Cadillac and wears a neat mustache and natty duds, a likable cynical sharpie who himself stakes young hustlers (for sixty per cent of their winnings). When he sees the raw, cocky upstart Vincent (Tom Cruise), he makes a deal to train the kid. Newman brings off some beautiful smiling deviltry. The kick he gets out of acting is inseparable from Eddie's con artistry, and, with the help of pungent low-life dialogue by Richard Price, who wrote the script, he carries the action along. The picture might have been a pop classic if it had stayed near the level of impudence that it reaches at its best. But about midway Fast Eddie has a crisis of conscience, or something, and when Eddie locks his jaw and sets forth to become a man of integrity the joy goes out of Newman's performance, which (despite the efforts of a lot of good actors) is the only life in the movie, except for a brief, startling performance by the twenty-five-year-old black actor Forest Whitaker as a pool shark called Amos. Having Eddie try to redeem himself—to purify himself—through pool is just an artistic conceit, and the second half is a terrible letdown. The plot switches and reversals leave the audience with unanswered questions and feelings of being left out. With Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio, Helen Shaver, John Turturro, and Bill Cobbs. Cinematography by Michael Ballaus; score by Robbie Robertson; production design by Boris Leven; editing by Thelma Schoonmaker. (11/3/86) (Bay Cinema, Coronet, 23rd St. West Triplex, Embassy 72nd St., and Embassy 1.)

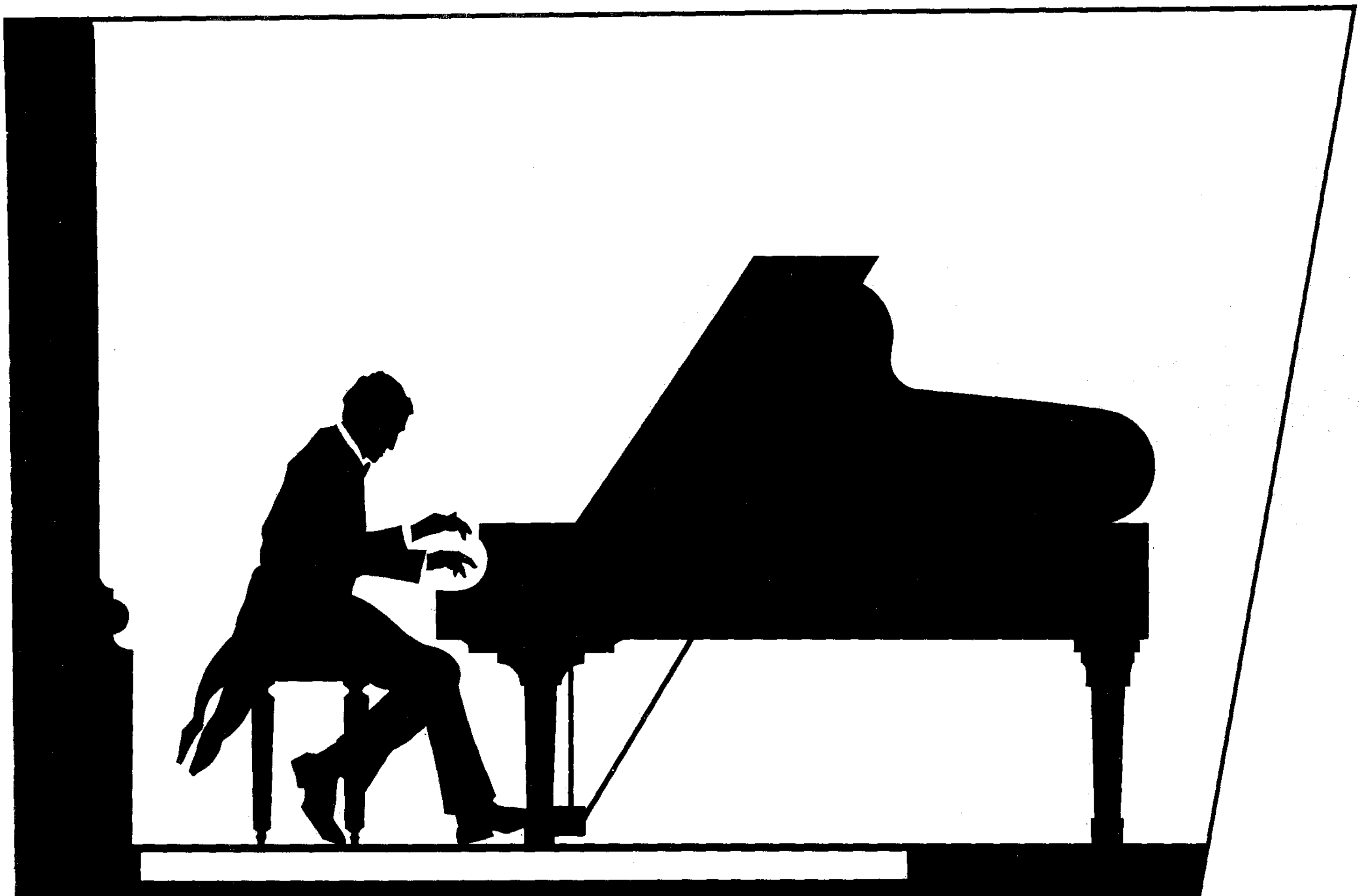
Down by Law—Jim Jarmusch's low-key minimalist comedy about American anomie, shot in black-and-white. The setting is New Orleans, where two deadbeats—Jack, an ineffectual pimp (John Lurie), and Zack, an itinerant disk jockey (Tom Waits)—become the victims of frameups and are put in the same prison cell, where they vegetate in hostile silence. Everything changes when a little, life-loving Italian, Roberto (Roberto Benigni), is put in with them; the three become pals, grinning and talking together. And, eventually, Roberto devises an escape plan. Jarmusch's passive style has its wit, but the style is deadening here until he brings in Roberto—a character out of folk humor. With Ellen Barkin, Billie Neal, Nicoletta Braschi, Rockets Redglare, and Vernel Bagneris. (10/20/86) (Cinema Studio; through Nov. 20. . . . ¶ Quad Cinema; starting Nov. 14. . . . ¶ Lincoln Plaza; starting Nov. 21.)

Eva (1962)—Jeanne Moreau as an elegant, heartless slut, and Stanley Baker as a born victim. Joseph Losey's film, set in Venice and Rome, was meddled with by the producers; what's left has flair and style (maybe too much of each), but the intentions aren't altogether clear. (Thalia; Nov. 18.)

The Fly (1958)—James Clavell—not yet a popular novelist—wrote the script for this tacky low-budget picture about a scientist whose carelessness gets him into a tragic pickle. It became a considerable box-office success. Maybe the idea of a man's head being reduced in size so that it fit onto the body of a fly was just so silly that it was rather tantalizing. Or maybe audiences couldn't resist the final sequence: caught in a spider's web, with the spider bearing down on him, the man-fly squeaks "Help me!" in the tiniest of voices. With Vincent Price, Herbert Marshall, Patricia Owens, Kathleen Freeman, and Al (later David) Hedison as the unlucky fellow. The draggy direction is by Kurt Neumann; based on a short story by George Langelaan. (There were two less popular sequels—"The Return of the Fly" in 1959, and "The Curse of the Fly" in 1965—before the 1986 reworking of the original by David Cronenberg; see below.) (Film Forum; starting Nov. 14.)

The Fly—Jeff Goldblum is the brilliant loner scientist Seth Brundle, who turns into Brundlefly, in David Cronenberg's remake of the 1958 horror film. Cronenberg gives the B-picture material new weight, and for what this version is it's very well done. But Cronenberg narrows the film down to one man's decaying body, and concentrates your attention on one stage after another of poor Brundle's becoming bent over double and deformed. And if the movie has a power, it's simply in our somewhat prurient fixation on watching a man rot until finally he's pleading for a coup de grâce. With Geena Davis and John Getz. The script, by Charles Edward Pogue, was

'S WONDERFUL



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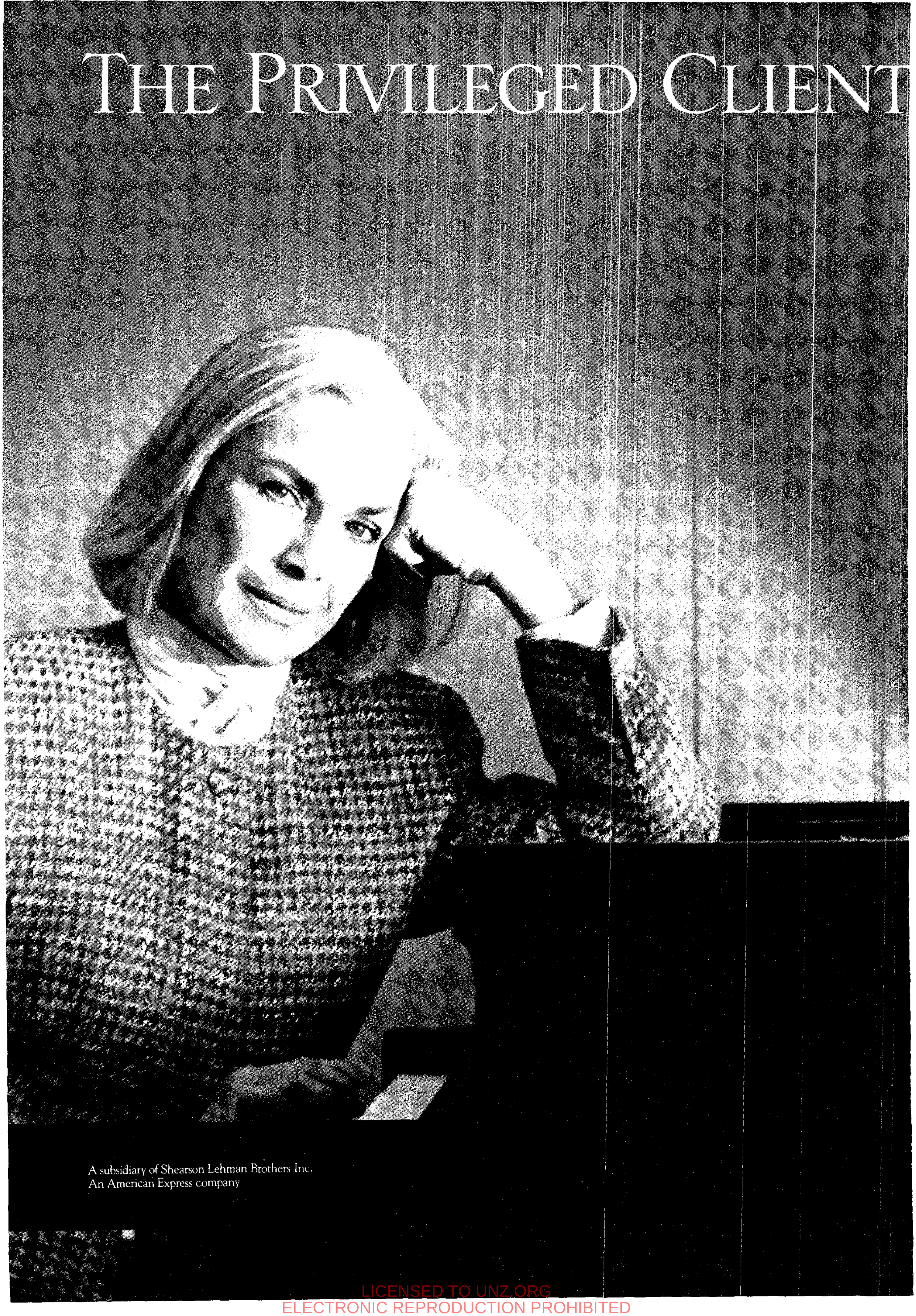
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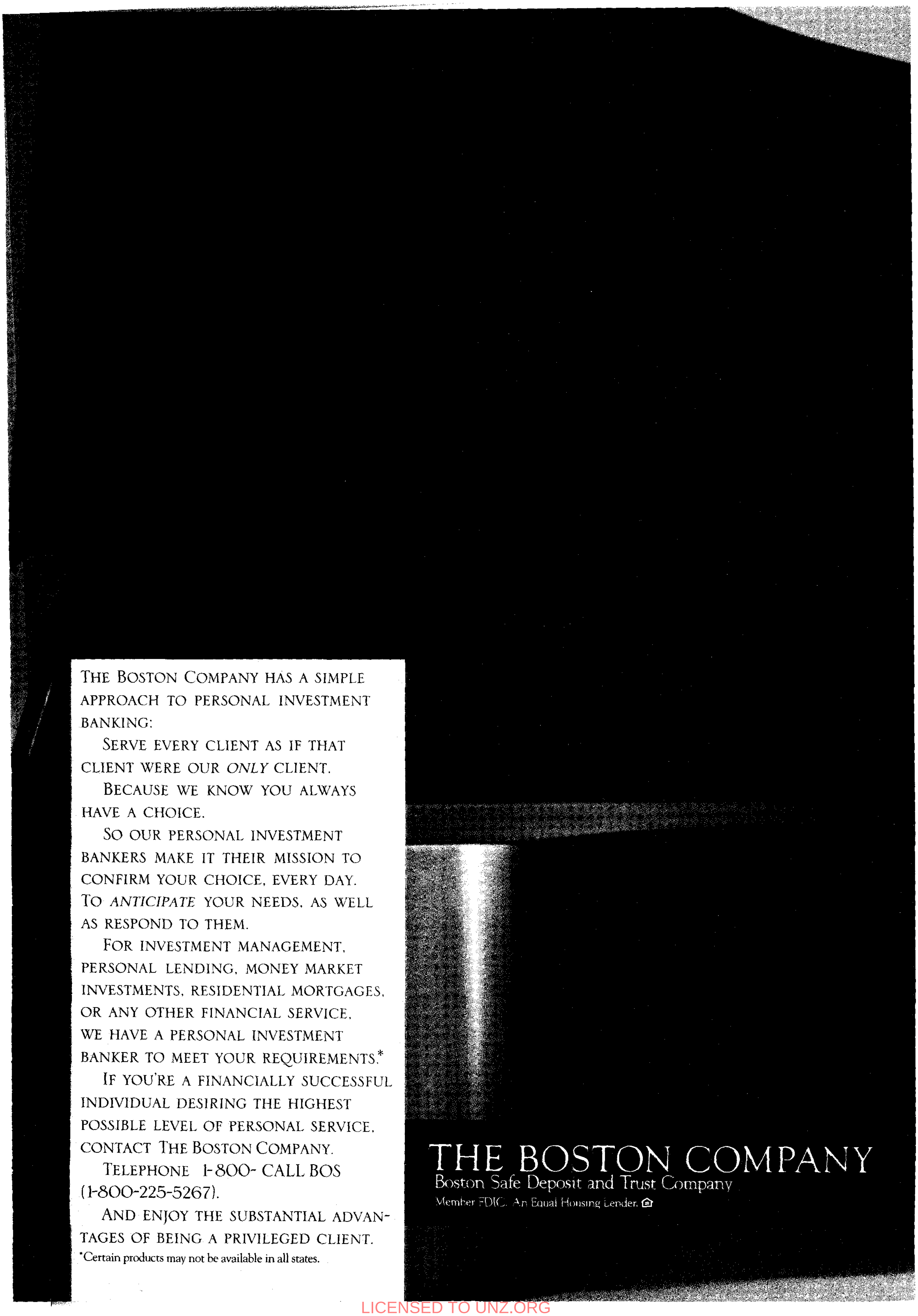

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reshaped by Cronenberg. (10/6/86) (Criterion Center.)

The Hustler (1961)—The test of what a man has inside him—the basic Hemingway-style masculine story that's frequently set in the bullring or, in this country, in the world of sports, especially among prizefighters—is set here in the world of pool sharks. Paul Newman is the young contender, Fast Eddie Felson, and Jackie Gleason is the old champ, Minnesota Fats. But Hemingway would cut out extraneous material, thereby raising the simple, unadorned test to the level of myth; the director Robert Rossen and his co-writer, Sidney Carroll, surround the test with an extra forty minutes or so of flabby "poetry." The dialogue comes out of the thirties and borrows heavily from Clifford Odets. A character does not ask a simple question like "Are you his manager?" He asks, "Are you his manager? His friend? His stooge?" And there's a tortured, crippled girl (Piper Laurie) who speaks the truth: she's a female practitioner of the Socratic method who is continually drinking her hemlock. The picture is swollen with windy thoughts and murky notions of perversions, and as Eddie's manager the magnetic young George C. Scott seems to be a Satan figure, but it has strength and conviction, and Newman gives a fine, emotional performance. You can see all the picture's faults and still love it. It's the most vital and likable of Rossen's movies. With Murray Hamilton, Myron McCormick (who is stuck with the worst pseudo-Odets role), Michael Constantine, Stefan Gierasch, and Vincent Gardina. Based on the Walter Tevis novel; cinematography by Eugen Schüfftan; production design by Harry Horner; music by Kenyon Hopkins; editing by Dede Allen. (In 1965, the theme was adapted to poker, in "The Cincinnati Kid.") (Film Forum; starting Nov. 14.)

Knight Without Armor (1937)—The Russian Revolution and a beautiful countess who just escapes the wicked Reds. Alexander Korda's big show for Marlene Dietrich. With Robert Donat as her escort. Directed by Jacques Feyder. (Regency; Nov. 16-17.)

Lifeboat (1944)—Ham-handed wartime Hitchcock. John Steinbeck and Jo Swerling concocted the symbol-laden script about the ordeal of a group of survivors of a torpedoed ship; the script's chief virtue is that it provides a raucous opportunity for Tallulah Bankhead to strut her comic sexiness. She plays a famous mink-coated journalist who develops a yen for John Hodiak, an oiler from the ship's engine room. Others aboard the small boat include Canada Lee, Henry Hull, Heather Angel, Hume Cronyn, William Bendix, and Walter Slezak as the U-boat captain. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Nov. 19.)

The Little Kidnappers (1954)—A gentle, affecting fable of childhood and loneliness—the story of two little boys, denied a pet, who find a baby and keep it hidden in the woods. Philip Leacock directed. (Thalia SoHo; Nov. 21-22.)

The Man Who Could Work Miracles (1937)—This version of H. G. Wells' comic fantasy is one of the most touching and good-natured of all the films that employ "supernatural" tricks and illusions. It's also one of the few with any real point. With Roland Young as the mild, bewildered miracle-maker, Ralph Richardson as the militarist whose swords are turned into plowshares, Ernest Thesiger (who never disappoints), Joan Gardner, George Zucco, Torin Thatcher, and, in a tiny part as a god, young George Sanders. Wells did the script, with Lajos Biro; Lothar Mendes directed. (Regency; Nov. 18-19.)

Men . . .—When the handsome, self-centered Julius (Heiner Lauterbach), a Munich advertising executive, discovers that his wife (Ulrike Kriener) has been having an affair with the oafish Stefan (Uwe Ochsenknecht), a long-haired bohemian, he wants to know what Stefan's attraction is, so he assumes a false name and moves in with him. Julius takes some kind of revenge by turning Stefan into an orderly bourgeois with a regular job; while that happens, whimsical gags are tossed together with a jocular feminist exposé of men's attitudes toward women. The picture is harmless and insipid, in the mode of French farces such as "Cousin, Cousine;" it sags in the middle and then collapses in an absurdist ending. Written and directed by Doris Dörrie. In German. (9/8/86) (Lincoln Plaza.)

Mephisto (1982)—István Szabó's indictment of a soulless actor, Hendrik Höfgen (played by Klaus Maria Brandauer), who, because he wants to go on performing, truckles to those in power and becomes the leading actor in Nazi Germany. Szabó sets up Höfgen as a symbolic actor—a man who is merely the sum of the roles he plays offstage and on—and at the outset Brandauer, who has gleaming cat eyes and a seductive smile, suggests a baby-faced killer-genius, like the young Orson Welles. Höfgen isn't allowed to be a great actor, though, and he seems too small for the epic scale of the attack. The film is gripping, but its stern air of rectitude produces discomfort; essentially Szabó seems to be condemning Höfgen for being an actor. With Rolf Hoppe and the superb, feline Karin Boyd, and a multinational cast—some of them dubbed. In German. (Public Theatre.)

My Beautiful Laundrette—A startlingly fresh movie about life in South London among the surly white street gangs and the Pakistani immigrants. In the foreground is a love affair between a dark-eyed, softly handsome, almost flowerlike Pakistani teen-ager, Omar (Gordon Warnecke), and a young blond street lout, Johnny (Daniel Day Lewis). They become partners when Omar persuades his slumlord uncle (Saeed Jaffrey) to let him have a ratty-looking failed laundrette, and the two boys, using stolen money, turn it into the laundrette of their flashy dreams. Directed by Stephen Frears, from a witty script by the young playwright Hanif Kureishi, the film catches you up in the racketeering and decay of modern big-city life; you feel that your blinders have been taken off. It's an enormous pleasure to see a movie that's really about something, and that doesn't lay on any syrupy coating to make the subject go down easily. (It's down before you notice it.) *The cast includes Shirley Anne Field,* Roshan Seth, Rita Wolf, and Souad Faress. (3/10/86) (Bleecker St. Cinema.)

The Overcoat (1962)—Russian adaptation of Gogol's story, directed by Alexei Batalov. Gogol set the story in the early nineteenth century, Batalov in the early twentieth century, which gives the film a peculiar double-period feeling, and the photography is arty; all the same, it is a wonderful story (about a badly-off clerk and the life of pawnshops), and the Slav sense of detail transfigures the film. Well worth seeing, and infinitely more delicate and less maudlin than the Wolf Mankowitz version of the same material. In Russian. (Thalia SoHo; Nov. 20.)

Passport to Pimlico (1949)—British comedy with a fine flavor and wonderful details, though the whimsy is rather self-congratulatory. An ancient royal charter ceding Pimlico to the Dukes of Burgundy is unearthed in a London shell hole, and the people of Pimlico are "just British enough to fight for our rights to be Burgundians." Margaret Rutherford is the historian who gives scholarly sanction to an independent Pimlico; Basil Radford and Naunton Wayne are the protocol-ridden bureaucrats trying to handle the crisis; Stanley Holloway and Hermione Baddeley are shopkeepers. Henry Cornelius directed. (Thalia; Nov. 17.)

Peggy Sue Got Married—Distressed by her marital troubles, Peggy Sue (Kathleen Turner), the mother of two grownup children, collapses *at the twenty-fifth reunion of her* high-school class, and when she wakes up she discovers that she has gone back in time to the spring of 1960. Directed by Francis Coppola, this is a dream movie that asks whether Peggy Sue, knowing what she does at forty-three, should marry the same boy—passionate Charlie (Nicolas Cage), the only man she ever dated—knowing that he'll turn into the man who introduces himself on television as Crazy Charlie, the Appliance King. The underlying question is: Should Peggy Sue reconcile with her husband or go ahead and get a divorce? Coppola's efforts to bring depth to this material that has no depth make the picture seem groggy. It's as if he were trying to reach through a veil of fog. With Barbara Harris, Barry Miller, and Kevin J. O'Connor. (10/20/86) (Loews 34th Street Showplace, Gemini, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and R.K.O. National Twin.)

A Room with a View—Adapted from the early novel by E. M. Forster, this is a whimsical social comedy about a muddled young English girl (Helena Bonham-Carter) who de-

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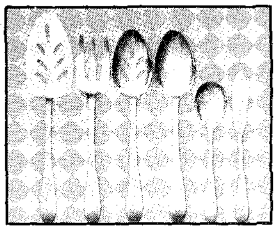

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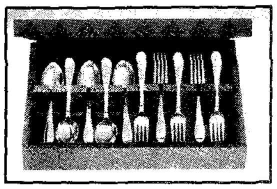

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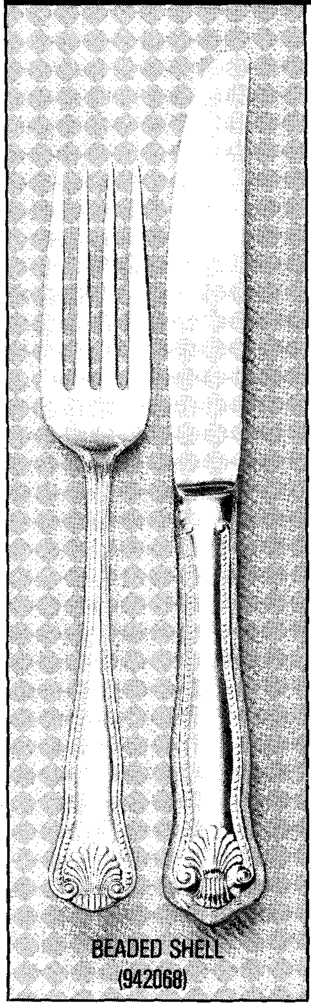

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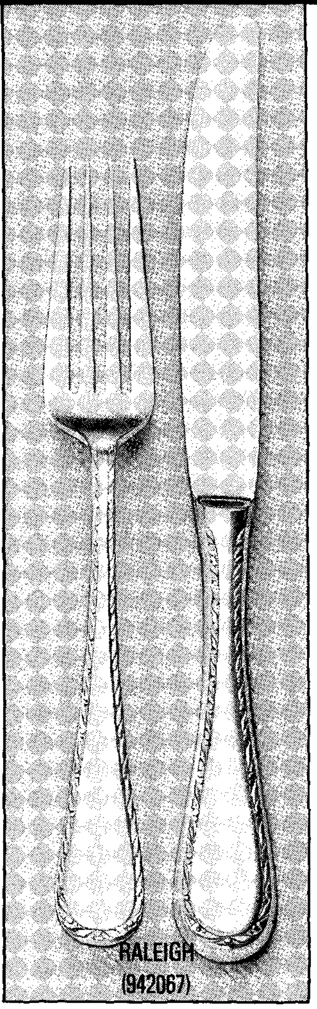

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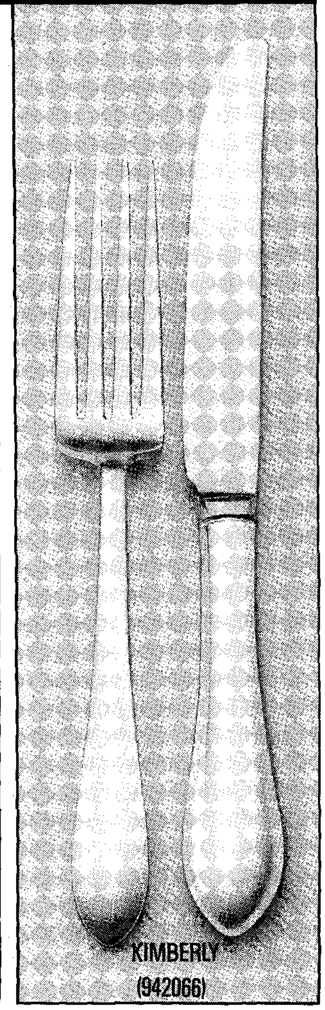

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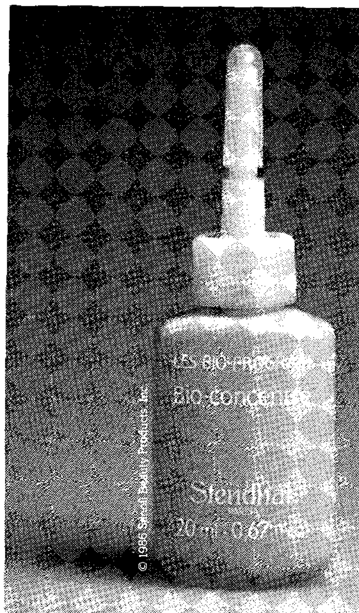

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Stendhal
PARIS

BERGDORF GOODMAN

sires yet fears sexual love; she runs away from the man (Julian Sands) who stirs her emotions, and becomes engaged to a rich twit (Daniel Day Lewis). Bonham-Carter lacks the carriage and presence of a trained actress, and Sands is playing Forster's flimsy—almost abstract—dream of a natural, uninhibited lover, and is rather vague. But the movie is well paced, and it never loses its hold on a viewer's affections, because it's so thoroughly inhabited. It's more than a little precious, but it's a piece of charming foolishness. With Denholm Elliott, Maggie Smith, Judi Dench, Simon Callow, and Rosemary Leach. It was directed by James Ivory, from a script by Ruth Prawer Jhabvala that pares down the text skillfully and takes much of its lively, dizzy dialogue directly from Forster. (3/24/86) (Paris; through Nov. 13. . . . ¶ Quad Cinema, and Embassy 72nd St.; starting Nov. 14.)

Ruthless People—A cheesy low farce, with Danny DeVito as a thieving millionaire who wants to kill his heiress wife (Bette Midler) and is overjoyed when she's kidnapped. With Judge Reinhold and Helen Slater (who has good eyes for rolling) as the warmhearted kidnappers; Anita Morris as the husband's mistress (she looks as if she could do considerably better); Bill Pullman as the mistress's ninny of a lover; and William G. Schilling as the police commissioner. Directed by the "Airplane!" threesome—Jim Abrahams, David Zucker, and Jerry Zucker. (7/14/86) (New Embassy 49th Street. No performances Wednesday, Nov. 12, and Tuesday, Nov. 18.)

She's Gotta Have It—The voluptuous, easygoing Nola (Tracy Camila Johns), a graphic designer who lives in the black bohemian world in Brooklyn, is happily juggling three lovers when she's faced by a mock crisis: each of the three men has turned possessive and wants to be her one and only. That's the premise of this quick-witted sex comedy written, directed, and edited by the twenty-nine-year-old Spike Lee, who shot it in 16-mm. in twelve days, on an almost nonexistent budget. Nola, her three lovers, and her family and friends explain themselves directly to the camera, and the film's basic set is Nola's bed; you can't shoot a movie much cheaper or faster than that. Lee's economies become part of what's enjoyable about the film, and he keeps it all sparking and bouncing along. With Tommy Redmond Hicks, John Canada Terrell, and Lee himself. (10/6/86) (Quad Cinema, Olympia Quad, and Criterion Center.)

Something Wild—With Jeff Daniels and Melanie Griffith, directed by Jonathan Demme. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, 34th St. East, Baronet, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and U.A. Twin.)

Song of the South (1946)—Musical version of Joel Chandler Harris's stories—sentimental, and offensive to some, but often effective. From the Disney studios, and employing both animation and live actors (James Baskette, Hattie McDaniel, Bobby Driscoll, Lucille Watson, Ruth Warrick, Luana Patten). (Guild, and Olympic Quad; starting Nov. 21.)

Stand By Me—On a summer weekend in 1959, four twelve- and thirteen-year-old boys from the fictional Castle Rock, Oregon (pop. 1,281), go on an overnight hike in the woods outside town to look for the body of a boy their age who has been missing for several days. The four, misfits who feel rejected, keep intuiting one another's emotions, and they're plucky—when they get in tight spots, they stand by each other. Rob Reiner's film, taken from Stephen King's autobiographical novella "The Body," overdoses on sincerity and nostalgia. Seeing it is like watching an extended Christmas Special of "The Waltons." With Wil Wheaton, River Phoenix, Jerry O'Connell, Corey Feldman, Andy Lindberg, and, as the narrator, Richard Dreyfuss. (9/8/86) (Eastside Cinema, 23rd St. West Triplex, Olympia Quad, and Embassy.)

The Thief of Bagdad (1940)—Magical Arabian Nights adventures, on enormous, spacious sets and in brilliantly clear Maxfield Parrish colors; the screen seems to be made of velvet. Sabu is the boy thief who befriends the prince who has been blinded and has had his kingdom usurped by the evil magician, the Grand Vizier Jaffar (Conrad Veidt). The script lacks enchantment; the flashback device at the beginning is unnecessarily complicated, and the dialogue throughout is distressingly ordinary. This adds to the film's other problems—the uneven rhythms and the occasional dead spots, the stagy use of the spectacular sets. Yet considering how many directors took turns on this picture (Ludwig Berger, Michael Powell, and Tim Whelan are all credited, and Zoltán Korda and William Cameron Menzies, who are credited only as associate producers, also directed, as did Alexander Korda), it's surprising how well it holds together. With Rex Ingram, June Duprez, and Miles Malleson. (Regency; Nov. 20-22.)

Things to Come (1936)—The most elaborate science-fiction movie ever made in England until "2001." H. G. Wells wrote the tendentious screenplay (based on his book "The Shape of Things to Come") and the celebrated designer William Cameron Menzies directed. Wells peers ahead through a century of devastation to the cold, abstract architecture of 2055. The whole "scientific" phantasmagoria is posh and modernistic—an amusingly dated view of the future. (It suggests the twenties.) The movie is more handsome than dramatic, with spacious sets and great costumes, and some wonderful howlers in Raymond Massey's and Ralph Richardson's dialogue and acting. With Cedric Hardwicke, John Clements, Ann Todd, Margaretta Scott, and Derrick de Marney. (Regency; Nov. 18-19.)

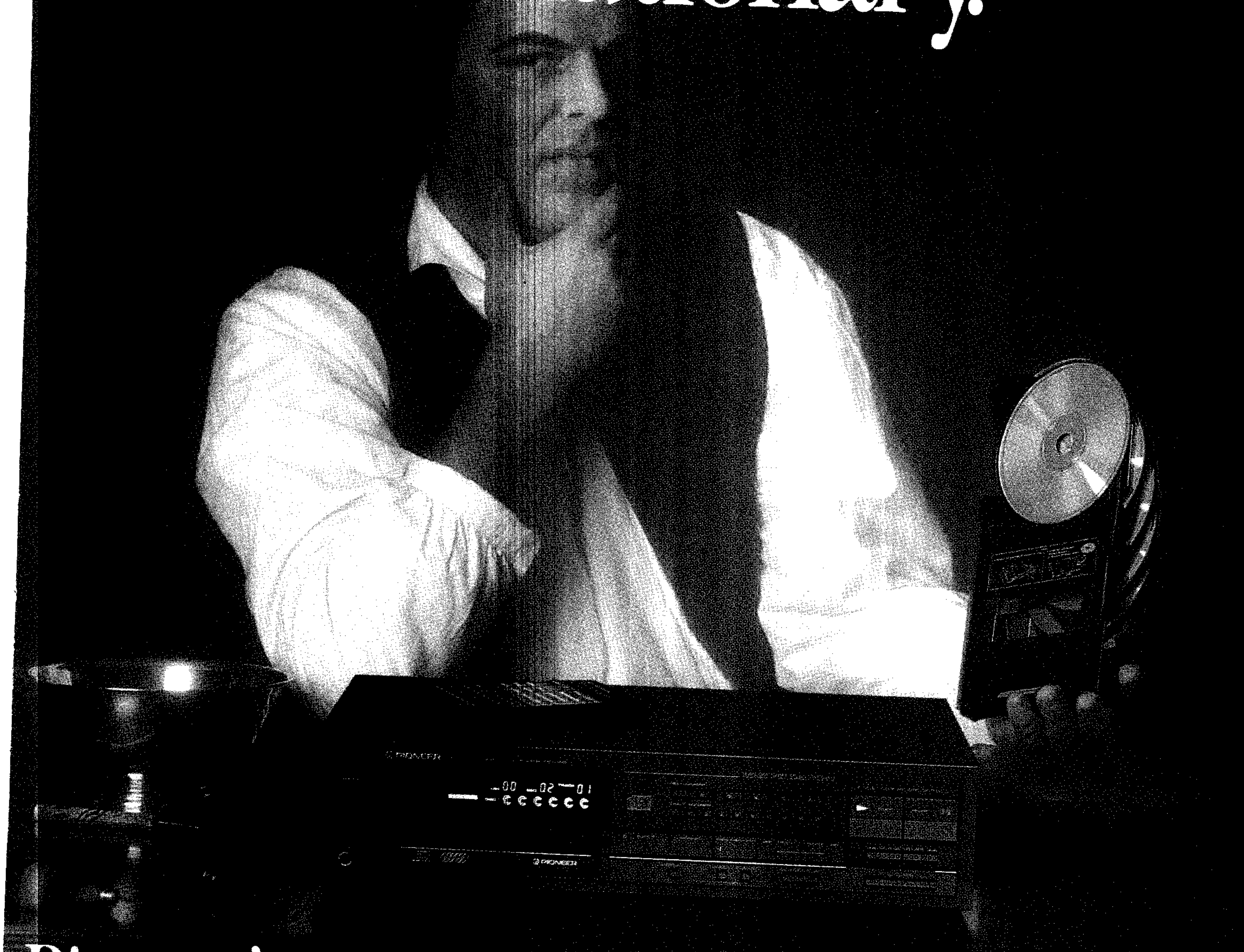
The Three Ages (1923)—Buster Keaton in love in the Stone Age, the Roman Age, and the Modern Age. With Margaret Leahy, Wallace Beery, Joe Roberts, and Horace Morgan. Directed by Keaton. (Thalia SoHo; Nov. 19.)

Titanic (1953)—The sinking of the Titanic was one of the most terrifying and fascinating disasters in maritime history, but one wouldn't guess it from this movie. In standard variations of "Grand Hotel" style, the cast includes an unbelievable American fop (Clifton Webb), his estranged wife (Barbara Stanwyck), an unfrocked priest (Richard Basehart), an obtrusive bore (Allyn Joslyn), a rich and salty Western lady (Thelma Ritter), and the doomed master of the ship (Brian Aherne). Jean Negulesco directed; the actual sinking looks like a nautical tragedy on the pond in Central Park. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Nov. 19.)

Top Gun—The strapping Kelly McGillis is an astrophysicist employed to teach the élite fighter pilots in training at San Diego's Miramar Naval Air Station; her co-star, the relatively diminutive Tom Cruise, is supposed to be the most daring of her students. When McGillis is offscreen, the movie is a shiny homoerotic commercial; the pilots strut around the locker room, towels hanging precariously from their waists. In between the bare-chested maneuvers, there's footage of ugly snub-nosed jets taking off, whooshing around in the sky, and landing while the soundtrack calls up Armageddon and the Second Coming. What is the movie selling? It's just selling, because that's what the producers, Don Simpson and Jerry Bruckheimer, and the director, Tony Scott, know how to do. Selling is what they think moviemaking is about. With Val Kilmer, Anthony Edwards, and Tom Skerritt. (6/16/86) (Embassy.)

True Stories—This first feature directed by David Byrne, of Talking Heads, is laid out like a musical-comedy documentary about a town, except that the town—Virgil, Texas—is imaginary. Byrne, the narrator and observer, introduces us to the townspeople who are about to take part in the pageantry of the Texas Sesquicentennial with their own "Celebration of Specialness." Byrne is looking for a true mythic image of America; Virgil is Our Town, it's Anytown, U.S.A., and the movie is about banality and eccentricity and consumerism. Byrne sets up the material for satirical sequences, yet he doesn't give it a satirical spin. The picture's tone is often insecure, but, working with the crack cinematographer Ed Lachman, Byrne brings a new visual sensibility to the screen (a respect for pared-down plainness), and after a rather shaky opening the characters themselves begin to engage us. With John Goodman, Jo Harvey Allen, Tito Larriva, Roebuck (Pops) Staples, Swoosie Kurtz, Spalding Gray, Annie McEnroe, and Alix Elias. The script is by Byrne, Beth Henley, and Stephen Tobolowsky. (10/20/86) (Sutton, 8th St. Playhouse, and Metro Cinema.)

Not Evolutionary, Revolutionary.



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THE
NEW YORKER

THE TALK OF THE TOWN

Notes and Comment

OUR favorite remark about the recent election was one made by the Democratic pollster Peter Hart. He said, somewhat mystically, that the election occurred "outside of Reagan." That is, the voters voted neither for him (they rejected eight of nine Senate candidates he campaigned for during the week before the election) nor against him (his personal popularity in the polls remained high): they voted outside of him. The phrase suggests another mystical-sounding but somehow apt notion—that in the last six years voters have been voting "within Reagan." That is, whether people were for or against the President, they took their positions in debates whose terms had been set by him, and made their appeals in a climate whose mood (one of "optimism," "good feeling," and so on) emanated from him. Curiously, during this year's campaigns no one seemed to try to change the terms of the debate or to dispel the mood; on the contrary, the campaigns were notable both for their lack of substance and for the absence of any serious argument with the President's policies from the Democrats. Sometimes *they* seemed to be trying to ride the President's coattails into office. And many Republicans seemed—especially in the final days of campaigning—to be backing away from the President. As for the public, it didn't seem to care much one way or the other. Only thirty-seven per cent of the electorate voted—the lowest turnout in more than forty years. Nevertheless, when it was all over, it was impossible not to notice that something had happened. A spell had been broken. The President was still popular, still powerful, still President. But around the country now a babble of other voices was audible. What they might be saying was as yet by no means clear. The themeless and empty election—though unexpectedly potent in altering the political climate that had existed for so long before it—gave no clue to that.

•

"I KNOW why I don't like the President," a young woman said the other day. "It's because he doesn't laugh. At least, I've never heard him laugh. If you reflect on it, you've probably never heard him laugh, either. You've *seen* him laugh; and his face is nearly always in the just-about-to-laugh position, and that gives you the impression that he is almost laughing, or has just left off laughing. But the laugh itself is missing, if you pause and try to remember what you have *heard*. The difference between a laugh and a smile is the most important difference in the world. A laugh is release of tension: you get a clean slate. A smile represents a buildup of tension. A laugh is something you can't help and maybe don't want to. The fact that you can do it in public is one of the nicest things about our way of being human—I mean, socially. The smile is not always one of the nice things about being human. A certain level of non-stop smiling can be exhausting; it's a form of one-upmanship—who can smile the most. It is an expression of fitness rather than of pleasure. 'I can smile in circumstances that would send you to bed for a week' is a *bullying* idea, actually. This is why generous people-at-the-top, like royalty, develop a very *slight* smile, which shows they are in the business, professionally, of being optimistic, no matter what, but they aren't going to co-opt your happiness. I think a very professional *slight* smile punctuated by an occasional raucous laugh—something really out of the question, almost bestial—would be the ideal. It's the reverse of what we have. I'm not joking. I can think of dozens of people—I am thinking about Men and Women in High Public Office—who are protected by someone else's smile; I mean the President's. These officeholders don't have to smile themselves; they can be stone cold, and defend themselves that way, without having to worry that they will be viewed as lacking in optimism. *That* has already been taken care of. I bet I would know hundreds of these officeholders if I were paying better attention. One good laugh and they would be swept away."

Barbara Shelley

• •

Wonders

NOW and then, we see something so awe-inspiring that it is hard to get the mind around it. Usually, it is something ostensibly simple—a sunset, say, or a magnificent view of the ocean with the waves beating the shore. We can't quite grasp with true, lasting appreciation the beauty or the significance of what we're seeing. Our sense of wonder is inadequate to the task, so we stand there feeling foolish and self-conscious. Nostalgia for the present, we think they call it. We sort of had that familiar feeling last week when all of a sudden we had to contemplate these fifty things at once: air-conditioners, air travel, antibiotics, the 1959 Austin/Morris Mini, automatic transmissions, black-and-white TV, color TV, compact disks, credit cards, detergents, disposable diapers, enriched bread, fluoridation, the 1965 Ford Mustang, frozen foods, the G.I. Bill of Rights, health insurance, hi-fis, the 1942 Jeep, latex paint, L.P. records, magnetic tape, the 1941 Nash 600, the 1949 Oldsmobile/Cadillac V-8, the 1966 Oldsmobile Toronado, paperbacks, pensions and Social Security, personal computers, the Pill, the 1984 Plymouth Voyager, the polio vaccine, power mowers, refrigerators and freezers, running shoes, safety belts, shopping malls, smoke detectors, Dr. Spock's "Baby and Child Care," standardized dining, suburbia, supermarkets, synthetic fabrics, tampons, the 1965 Toyota Corona, transistors, transparent tape, V.A. and F.H.A. mortgages, VCRs, the 1951 Volkswagen Beetle, and washers and dryers.

We were at the Cooper-Hewitt Museum, where these fifty innovations that have radically changed our lives are represented in an exhibition called "Milestones: Fifty Years of Goods and Services." Five decades of consumer paradise! All those brand names! All the stuff we can't live without! We were stupefied, at a loss to comprehend the essence of these "small wonders and big deals"—in the words of the magazine *Consumer Reports*, which is celebrating its fiftieth anniversary with the show and a companion book called "I'll Buy That!"

The funny thing was that as we strolled through the show with a copy of "I'll Buy That!" we didn't see anything we would want to buy. Either we had it already or had just thrown it away or remembered it from times gone by. Yesterday's goods have an air of the amusingly quaint. This wasn't like shopping. It was more like Ripley's Believe It or Not.

The first McDonald's is now a museum.

Frozen foods doubled our individual consumption of vegetables to two hundred and twenty pounds a year.

The A&P was the first chain store.

Piggly Wiggly, the first self-service grocery store, had six hundred and five items and four aisles.

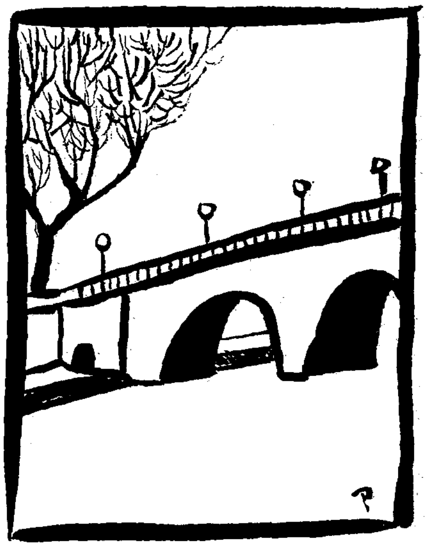
Without air-conditioners, we couldn't have jet planes or glass-slab high rises or the Sun Belt. Without air travel, couples couldn't work coasts apart and spend weekends together.

Before automatic washing machines came along, women spent one day a week at hard labor doing the laundry.

And then there's the wonder of enriched bread. Whole-grain bread used to be peasant bread. Refined flour was expensive, so only the rich could have white bread. But refining removed the nutrients, so it had to be enriched. Along the way, it got cheaper, and the masses got hold of it. So the upper classes decided that white bread was peasant bread. Now they wanted whole-grain bread, which was more expensive.

Some specific wonders on display: a Toro lawnmower; a specimen of *Penicillium notatum* from Dr. Alexander Fleming's original mold culture, 1928; a framed Donald Duck bread wrapper; a flyswatter; an assortment of old credit cards; a bucket of Kem-Tone; a TV dinner; the Norman Rockwell painting of the boy who said, "Look, Mom—no cavities!;" a 1947 Kenmore automatic washer (it was nicknamed the Jeep for its rugged functionality, but it had to be bolted to the floor, because it jumped around so much); paperback copies of "God's Little Acre," "The Catcher in the Rye," and "Macbeth;" a 1948 Motorola black-and-white TV set; some charming Levittown family snapshots from 1949 to 1962; and some record albums ("Aida" and "Meet the Beatles!"). In a bedroom closet we saw the 1962 Trackster I, the first shoe designed specifically for jogging, and some 1941 football pants made of synthetic fabric.

As we were pondering the mysteries of progress, an excited teacher came plowing through with about thirty somewhat less excited schoolchildren—third graders, by the look of them. "What is this, boys and girls? A lawnmower! I'm a city person. And what do you think this is? A smoke detector—no such thing up till a few years ago! Do you know that when your mothers were kids there was no such thing as Pampers? The diaper man came! Am I kidding, or what? Now move along, boys and girls." At the computer corner, there was a little law-and-order problem, with everyone wanting a chance at the keyboard. "You have this in your school, but do you know there are *adults* who don't know how to work this? Not so long ago, there was no such thing as a computer." She was a peppy woman in copper-colored shoes and curls. As we followed along, we kept hearing the refrain "No such thing." At the entertainment center, she made the children sit quietly and watch commercials and clips from old TV shows. Fred and Ethel Mertz were defrosting their refrigerator, and Ethel was emptying a pan of water and complaining that she wouldn't have such a mess if she had a new Westinghouse frost-free freezer-refrigerator combination. "You've been listening to Betty Furness," Fred griped. As the videotapes changed, the teacher provided a running commentary. " 'The Twilight Zone'! Elvis Presley! The Twist!" The sight of teen-agers Twisting got a large laugh from the children. "There's the old Mustang. The rock-and-roll era! Poodle skirts! James Dean! Hula hoops!" Some of these things weren't on the screen, but the teacher was on a trip down Memory Lane. Loretta Lynn started singing, "I'm tearing down your brooder house 'cause now I've got the Pill." Loretta was in overalls and high heels. The teacher said, "You're getting a sense, boys and girls, of the way we all lived not so long ago. Oh, American Express! Don't leave home without it! We're now getting more and more into—" She paused, studying the screen. She didn't know what she was seeing. It was spooky scenes reminiscent of the film "1984" and turned out to be a 1984 Apple-computer commercial. She didn't finish the sentence, but the children didn't notice.



King of All Kings

JOHN BENJAMIN ALFRED REDMAN, who is the sole owner and chief executive of V.I.P. Sewer Cleaning, a plumbing enterprise with headquarters in Brooklyn, prefers to be called Johnny Redd. When you come equipped with Johnny Redd's range of talents, you're entitled. Not many plumbers double as private investigators, but Johnny Redd does. Along with a partner, he owns and manages Verify Investigation & Protection Services. V.I.P. Sewer Cleaning has a slogan: “Try Us . . . You’ll Like Us!” Verify Investigation & Protection Services’ slogan is “Investigations Throughout the World.” Although Johnny Redd possesses licenses and legal permits to operate a car and a motorcycle, to own a pistol, a shotgun, and a mobile phone, and to do private investigating and general contracting, when he beholds his plastic-sheathed plumbing license he says, “I prize this license over any other license I got. You could become a doctor or a lawyer much easier than a plumber.” About three-quarters of Johnny Redd’s working time is devoted to plumbing, the remainder to private investigating. Verify Investigation & Protection Services offers clients criminal-industrial undercover work, polygraph expertise, executive protection, armed bonded couriers, electronic security equipment, chauffeur service, armed escorts, missing-person searches, and a few other conveniences. When Johnny Redd is asked how he manages two such disparate businesses, he says, “Easy. Rockefeller did it. Paul Getty did it. You just got to have key people in key positions. The trick is to get the right people—remember that—in any business.”

“We used to go to Cozumel with regularity. Then everybody started going to Cozumel. It always happens to us.”

• •

Johnny Redd is tall, black, muscular, and physically forthright. He has a round face, straight reddish-brown hair that would reach his shoulders if he didn’t keep it tied on top of his head, an ample supply of vanity, and a fondness for bright-colored metal-studded leather clothing. He doesn’t like to discuss his age, but he looks about forty. He is a graduate of Automotive High School, an ex-marine, a veteran of the New York Police Department, and an enthusiastic Republican. “I used to be in law enforcement, and then I realized that wasn’t for me,” he says. “I’m very law-abiding, but I got the hell out. That was just a stepping stone. I’m a Republican because I’m strictly for people earning their living. It’s terrible what’s going on in this country. I’m against these people wantin’ something for nothin’. You know, in Japan they don’t even have holidays. That’s how they got the jump on us.”

On Waverly Avenue, in the Clinton Hill section of Brooklyn, Johnny Redd lives in the house he grew up in—a three-story row house that has pink metal awnings and a façade of pink and white stones, which give it a vaguely Mediterranean and vaguely Miami Beach appearance, and has a “Beware of Dog” sign in the front window, which indirectly refers to a lot of nice stuff inside, including, Johnny Redd says, a basement “as elegant as a night club, with a water fountain in the ceiling.” Like any busy chief executive, Johnny Redd moves around a lot. Sometimes you might call him at home early in the morning to make an appointment and he might say, “Come on by in an hour, and make sure you come.” But then by the time you got to his place of business—it’s a garage fifty feet from the house, directly opposite P.S. 11, the Purvis J. Behan School—something else might have come up. Someone who owes Johnny Redd a bunch of money might have unexpectedly got in the mood to pay up, or he might have suddenly had to run out to a big sprinkler job in Queens, so when you arrived he was unavailable for consultation. When this happens, it’s comforting if someone else in the Johnny Redd organization is available for consultation.

The other morning, Darryl Walton, whose nickname is Mr. T., and whom Johnny Redd has referred to as "one of my lieutenants, a very loyal, dedicated employee in a key position," was situated in a key position on the floor of the garage on Waverly Avenue. Specifically, he was lying on an oil-stained Oriental rug ministering to Johnny Redd's motorcycle. The motorcycle is another manifestation of Johnny Redd's talent. Although Johnny Redd owns a silver 1965 Rolls-Royce (Silver Cloud), a red 1972 Cadillac Eldorado convertible with a vanity license plate that says "VIP REDD," a white 1976 Continental Mark IV, and a fleet of blue Chevrolet trucks, none of these come as close to the core of Johnny Redd's being as his motorcycle. No other vehicle on earth resembles Johnny Redd's motorcycle. In one hand Darryl Walton held a tube of glue and in the other a strand of red rhinestones. Three times a week, Darryl Walton replaces any rhinestones that have fallen off the motorcycle. Rhinestones, chrome, and gold are essential elements of the Johnny Redd aesthetic. They have made it possible for Johnny Redd's motorcycle, which started life as a simple Harley-Davidson Electra Glide, to look now as if it were wearing a chrome Oscar de la Renta ball gown.

An overlay of scrolled chrome filigree has been applied to most of the metallic surfaces. The eagle atop the front fender is gold-plated. So are the dollar-sign-shaped rhinestone-studded hubcap covers and the crown that is fastened to the backrest. The front fender looks as if it came from Rolls-Royce, and so does the chrome radiator grille. Johnny Redd refers to the chrome Rolls-Royce emblem atop the grille as "the naked lady in front." He says, "That's my sweetheart." There is a plane of black leather between the grille and the windshield. Half of a chrome-plated .357 Magnum revolver has been welded to the right side of the gas tank, and an AM/FM quadraphonic radio and tape deck have been built into the dashboard. An aquatic diorama has been countersunk into the red leather cargo compartment. There is an on-board computer. Red rhinestones on the dashboard spell "Johnny." The oil-pressure and voltage gauges look as if they were wearing red Dynel wigs. The running board is illuminated with red lights. "Johnny Redd" is spelled out in rhinestones on the backrest, and the gold-plated crown that is built into the backrest is studded with diamond chips that spell "King of All Kings."

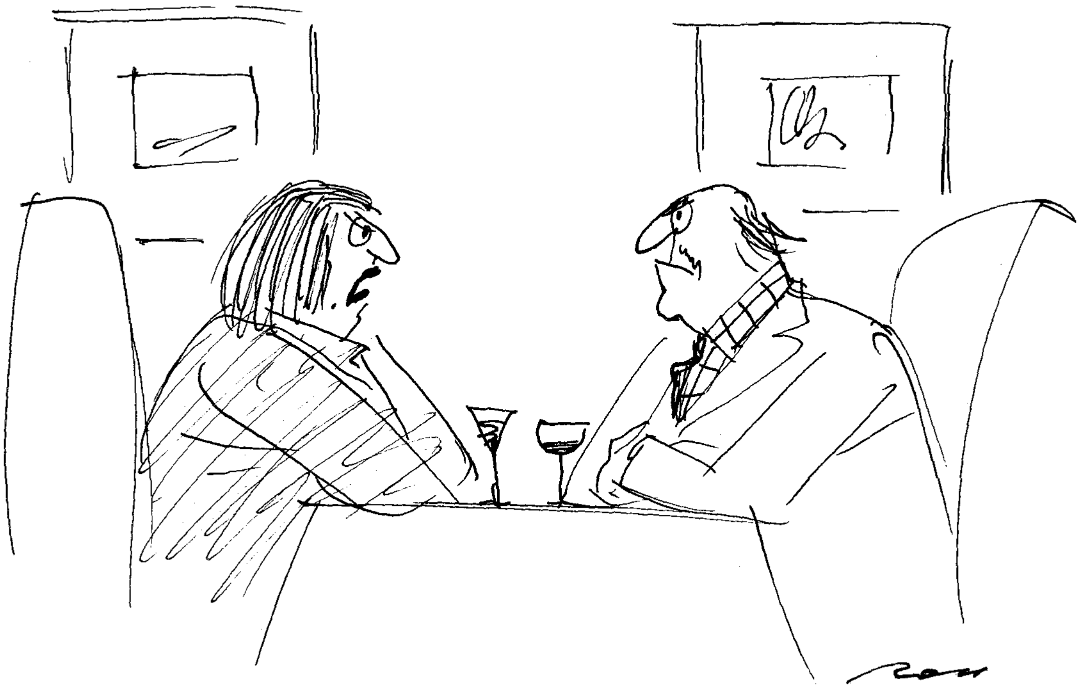
A sticker on the windshield shows a frontal view of a revolver and says, "Never Mind the Dog. Beware of the Owner." Three other stickers on the windshield say "Warning! If You Value Your Life as Much as I Value This Bike, Don't Mess with It." Some delicate floral patterns have been etched into the windshield and the standards that hold the rearview mirrors. Each mirror has an imprint of Johnny Redd's name in red script. The mirror mounts have rhinestone-studded gold-plated dollar signs. There is also a big chrome-and-rhinestone dollar sign on the cargo compartment. A five-inch portable color television set used to ride inside the cargo compartment, but Johnny Redd removed it a while back to give himself more storage room. Black leather fringe hangs from the cargo compartment and the driver's seat. The fringe goes nicely with the metal-studded black leather gloves that Johnny Redd wears when he rides. He also wears a medieval-looking helmet with a snakeskin bill, feathers, chrome filigree, and a crest made from broom bristles. If Johnny Redd doesn't feel like wearing that helmet, he wears one with a chrome crest and a black ponytail of human hair. He acquired these from a member of the New Breed Motorcycle Club when that organization folded a few years ago. The previous owner of the helmets didn't want to sell them, but Johnny Redd shrewdly approached him in a weak moment, when he needed the money.

Johnny Redd doesn't belong to any formal motorcycle club himself, but he has a certificate from the Pythons Motorcycle Club confirming that he has ridden in its Annual Bike Blessing Service and Parade. The certificate has been signed by all the officers of the Pythons, including Mr. Big Stuff, president; Crasher, vice-president; Sweet Andy, treasurer; Baby Huey, business manager; Run Joe, road captain; Beddie, road captain No. 2; Killer Joe, sergeant at arms; and Mr. T. (a different Mr. T.), second sergeant at arms.

One recent morning, Johnny Redd happened not to be occupied with other business and was therefore available for consultation. He cordially consented to extoll the motorcycle's mechanical prowess. "I've owned three different show bikes, but this one surpasses them all," he said. "It took ten people five years to get this bike to look this good. It took me five years to pay for it. And what you're looking at in beauty, I had just as much put into the engine and operation of the bike. With all that jazz on it, I thought I needed that extra power. It's too powerful, really. Yeah, very, *very* powerful. It pulls a hill like it's nothin'. Very powerful. Plus I had special gearing put in it. See, nobody ever went this far out on a motorcycle, so I figured I might have trouble with it. So I had all that performance work done."

An attractive woman passed by the entrance of Johnny Redd's garage as he was explaining this. He greeted her by saying, "Are you looking for me?" It turned out she wasn't. Even the most beautiful woman in the world would not be allowed to take the motorcycle around the block for a solo spin. No

Ventriloquist



"You're wrong and you know it, and I'm right and I know it!"

• •

matter how much you admire Johnny Redd's bike, he won't let you drive it. He'll let you sit on it, but that's all. He let a blond actress ride *with* him when they appeared together in a movie called "Satan Studs," but he did the driving. Johnny Redd gets a little sheepish when he talks about that experience. "It wasn't what you'd call a Class One picture," he said. "It wasn't a 'Rambo' or nothing." Once, two women were photographed sitting on the motorcycle "buck naked," but Johnny Redd doesn't recall all the details. Graciously, he has allowed two couples to get married on the motorcycle—not simultaneously—but, of course, they weren't able to borrow it for their honeymoons. Muhammad Ali sat on it once and asked to drive it, but Johnny Redd told him no way. On a number of occasions, Johnny worked for Ali as a bodyguard. He has done the same thing for Larry Holmes, Rocky Graziano, Mick Jagger, and Telly Savalas, and he has autographed photographs to prove it. He also has a letter from Jimmy Carter. "I spent a weekend in the White House with Jimmy Carter," he said. "Henry Jackson, the senator from Washington—Squirt Jackson—arranged it. He saw me on the street in New York with my motorcycle and said the President would like to see it. So I went down there for the weekend, and then Jimmy Carter sent me a letter to thank me for coming. Malcolm Forbes was interested in me, too. He wanted me to go on a cruise and then a motorcycle trip through China with him. But I couldn't leave my business." Johnny Redd admires all his luminary acquaintances, but he still won't let them drive the motorcycle. Rules are rules.

A red-and-white painted sign inside the garage enumerates some of the other rules that Johnny Redd lives by. If you lose a tool and it turns up later, that costs you five dollars. Losing it permanently costs you a bundle. Forgetting to put the keys to one of Johnny's five trucks back on the proper nail also sets you back five dollars, and so does failing to call headquarters when you're supposed to. Forgetting to leave a V.I.P. Sewer Cleaning fluorescent sticker at a job site when you finish a job—a fiver. No employee is permitted to throw out garbage without Johnny Redd's approval. Rule No. 15 says, "DO NOT WORK FOR ANY ATTORNEY UNLESS INSTRUCTED TO DO SO." Another "BEWARE OF DOG" sign is conspicuously displayed. This apparently refers to King, a Doberman pinscher who spends some of his time gnawing a rawhide bone the size of a rhinoceros femur and the rest of his time emphatically resting his paws on the shoulders of anyone who steps within the radius of his leash.

Whenever Johnny Redd rides the motorcycle, he takes with him several photographs of it. These he gives to doormen and security guards, so they will know to report a serious theft if they should happen to see anyone other than Johnny Redd cruising by on it. Johnny Redd hates to dwell upon the misfortunes that might befall his motorcycle. If you ask whether he has ever had a flat tire or a mechanical breakdown, he says, "Don't even mention it. Let's face it, I can't afford for that bike to break down nowhere. If I go to make a phone call, when I come back things ain't gonna be the same. I keep the bike in tip-top shape. I park it wherever I wanna park it, but I don't stay away from it too long."

Usually, wherever Johnny Redd parks the motorcycle it draws a crowd. Sometimes he hangs out in Manhattan at the Caliente Cab Company, on Seventh Avenue South, sometimes at the Spring Street Bar, in SoHo. He has also spent a lot of time at the CAT Club, in the East Village. At the CAT Club not long ago, Johnny Redd became friendly with some people in a rock band called Kill Me. Someone named Randy is in charge of the band, and he is arranging for a movie star named Dirty Hanky and a girl who is a movie star, too, to pose with the motorcycle for a rock video. Randy has already arranged to have some T-shirts imprinted with a photograph of the motorcycle.

"They put the bike on a T-shirt, and the bike looks beautiful," Johnny Redd said. "But they also put the name of the band on the shirt. So when I wear the shirt I'm going around with a shirt that says 'Kill Me.' Everybody be laughing when they see me in that shirt. I'm trying to spray-paint off the 'Kill Me' part. Why do I want to wear something that says 'Kill Me'? I got too much to live for. Me and the bike, we're supposed to be on 'Miami Vice.' We already did some shooting at the heliport and at the Water Club. You know who else I used to ride on my bike? Miss Rheingold. I met her at the Spring Street Bar. Everybody who sees that bike falls in love with it. Hey, I've done a lot of things with that motorcycle. I'm an interesting guy, right?"

THE BRIDGE OF SIGHS

MY wife's Aunt Eda saw my face in a dream two months before I appeared in Peru. I've seen the face of your husband, she told my wife. He has a very strange face, almost a nothing face. That is what she said about me the day after the dream. But he's a foreigner, she added, and that's something.

Because of a small fire in her house, which had left a lingering smell of smoke, Eda dreamed the dream not in her own bed, in the district of Jesús María, but in her sister Carla's spare bed, in a little green house in the district of San Isidro. Religious objects were hung over Carla's spare bed—a wooden crucifix, a silver crucifix, a stone pietà. Eda was a *bruja*, a witch—the clairvoyant of the family. Before sleep, she pulled the Christian objects off the wall and put them under the bed. The dream was fleeting, the duration of a blink—just a glimpse of a funny foreign face with rheumy brown eyes, a big hook nose, and a scraggly, stringy beard. A fresh cycle of dreams occurred once Eda returned to her own bed—dreams of astonishing clarity and vividness. She saw skyscrapers, a river, lush green parks, and birds peculiar to the Northern Hemisphere.

In those days, my wife was a serious girl—she is not so serious now—living with her mother and brothers in a bright-red house in the Miraflores district, six blocks from the sea cliffs of the Costa Verde, Lima's Green Coast, which is actually a faded shade of yellow. She was in love with a Peruvian doctor, Arturo Velasco del Zadrón, a pediatrician with wavy black hair, jet-black eyes, a German road car, and a glass house in the swank La Molina hills. My wife loved him in a tender way. He was many years older—she's never told me how many—and looked after her in a way no young boy ever could. He was not classically handsome—as though that mattered—nor was he emotionally invincible in the typical mode of Latin males.

My wife, who passionately believed in the power of witches, pleaded with Eda: I don't want to marry the foreigner, I want to marry Arturo. Eda was saddened, apologetic. I'm just a messenger, she said—a vessel. Maybe there's another view. Come to my house and we'll read the cards in my garden.

Eda lived in the heart of Jesús María, a district fallen into disrepair. At night, movie marquees shone with Grade B Mexican or American movie titles, rice steamed in little *chifas*, police prowled for terrorists. Eda's house was white, surrounded by high concrete walls topped with a tangle of barbed wire and smeared with competing political slogans. Eda liked to joke that the groups who were out of power were the ones who always used exclamation points.

Eda's house, like many Lima houses, featured a roofless garden patio—an area of blue Spanish floor tiles, vine-covered walls, miniature fruit trees, and stone benches. It was here that Eda read the Spanish cards, *las cartas españolas*—a fifty-two-card deck with the nines thrown out. My wife chain-smoked. Eda closed her eyes and concentrated on my wife's image. Then she searched the deck for the card that represented that image—the ten of spades. The ten stood for a young woman, and the suit indicated dark hair and dark eyes. My wife put her palm against the ten of spades and repeated her name three times: Luz García López, Luz García López, Luz García López. The card was returned to the deck and Eda shuffled quietly, expertly, for ten or fifteen seconds. Then my wife cut the deck in three places. Eda began to spread out the cards, ending up with six groups of eight cards each.

The ten of spades was in a group that contained the ace of hearts—the card of love and marriage, the card that crowns a romantic reading. Eda said the ace of hearts meant that love would be completed. Five clubs were also in that group: cards promising great alterations, upheavals, and a change of scenery. Yes, you're going to travel, Eda said. And there, at the head of the next group, was the jack of hearts, a card usually associated with a young man in love. That is your foreigner, Eda said solemnly. Surrounding the jack, darkening it, were more spades—cards suggesting problems, complications, thwarted actions, broken hopes. Eda seemed on the verge of tears. You'll have trouble going away with him, but you'll go, she finally said. See, there's the ace of diamonds—there's money and success.

And Arturo, my wife wanted to know.

He's down there, Eda said coldly. The suicide king, so much removed, so far away.

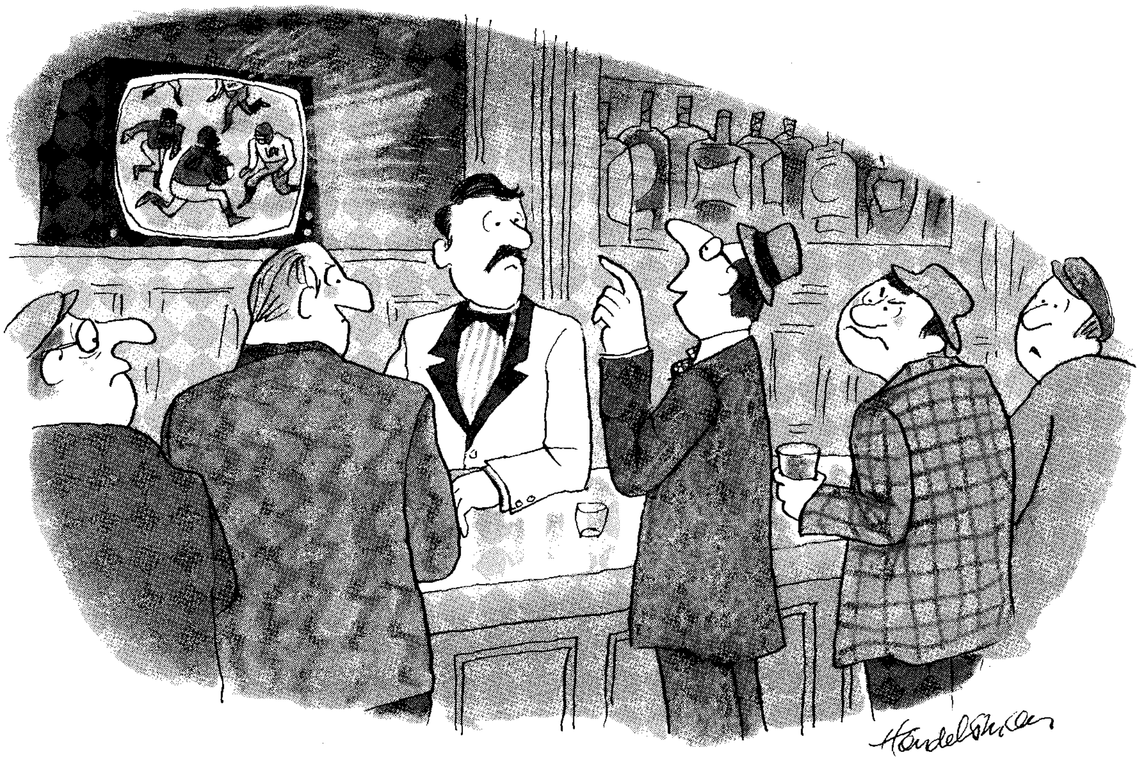
After that, my wife continually pestered Eda: Can it be that you are wrong? Eda read the cards again and again, over and over—at noontime, at night, when the moon was new and when it was full. They were always the same.

MY wife says Arturo didn't believe in fate. That was part of his character—that he believed in very definite, tangible things.

In the district of Barranco, spanning a bone-dry gorge, lies the Puente de los Suspiros, the Bridge of Sighs. It's situated behind a pleasant little plaza with fountains and a bandstand. Here lovers rendezvous, couples kiss. Every weekend, my wife and Arturo would slowly walk across the Bridge of Sighs and down the steep, stone-littered alley behind it to reach the clifftop, where you could look out to sea. Arturo liked to point out the old houses that sat along the ridgetop, and said that those houses floated on clouds of luck, because they would be the first to crumble in an earthquake. The sight of those houses clinging to the ridge always moved him. He said that one day they would be swept away. He was not a sensationalist saying this but a man who saw the fragility of all things.

A month before I appeared in Peru, they took a trip together. They flew across the mountains to Cuzco, the old Inca capital high in the sierra. Arturo was to lecture to some local doctors about new methods in pediatrics. They stayed in a small hotel on a crooked street. From the window of their room, you could see over the tops of the tile roofs to the dark-brown mountains that rose above the city. Dogs barked. Indian peddlers cried out in Quechua, the local language. Arturo stood before the mirror and combed his hair. My wife sat on the edge of the bed. This was her first time in the Andes. Arturo said, Drink bottled water, wash the fruit. We're from Lima—we're tourists.

He left for his lecture. My wife was going out to an alpaca factory on the edge of the city to buy sweaters for her mother and brothers. Halfway down the hotel stairs, her head began to ache. Then it began to throb, and to flash with violent little pops. By the time she made it back to the room, it was as though a huge screw were being twisted into the center of her forehead. She lay down on the bed. A fierce nausea came over her. This was *soroche*, altitude sickness. She said to herself, I'm going to die. She picked up the receiver of the black telephone by the side of the bed. No line. Telephones were always out of order in Cuzco. She tried to stand, but collapsed face down on the hard bed. She retched. Her body shivered. Then an image of Arturo bloomed in her mind. She saw him standing in a doorway in his doctor's whites, with children in the arms of Indian women in the background. Blood was sprinkled on his coat. His mouth was moving, he was saying something. With slow waves of his fingers, he was motioning her to come closer.



"May I suggest, bartender, that instead of watching this silly sporting event we switch over to a rather important documentary now on Channel 13?"

She discovered that if she lay perfectly still and didn't move her head the dizziness subsided, the nausea abated. She was grateful. Soon she heard something that reminded her of the faint fall of shower water. It was raining. It was raining in Cuzco the way it never rained in Lima. She crawled off the bed and made it to the window on her hands and knees. It was as if she had never seen it rain before. When Arturo came back to the room, he found her sleeping by the open window, her hands and arms and shoulders wet.

Later, they lay together in the bed in the hotel room. Arturo said, Poor Peru. He said he felt ashamed because sometimes, at night or when he was just walking down the street in bright sunlight, he so longed to be European that his body ached. He said he looked in the mirror and saw his black hair and his complexion, with its hint of darkness, and sometimes wept from self-pity. He said that after his time abroad—after his medical training in Spain and his residency at a London hospital—he returned to Peru and wanted to shield his eyes from what he saw, the poor, pained face of Peru. He wanted to know if this was so terrible—what kind of man was he? All the while they lay in bed, Arturo never touched her. This gesture embarrassed her with its beauty.

By then it was summer. One bright, dazzling summer day, they drove down the Pan-American Highway south into the desert. Boys stood by the side of the road selling beach balls and Inca Kola, the sweet, yellowish national soft drink of Peru. I can see the kind of day it was because in time I would learn what that very type of day is like. They listened to music—Arturo liked pop instrumentals, the sort arranged by Ray Conniff. At El Silencio Beach, they got out and trudged past abandoned stone huts to the smoky-white sand. The beach was nearly deserted. The ocean was a fabulous blue, and shiny rock formations rose from the water. They oiled themselves and each other. My wife rubbed coconut oil on Arturo's round shoulders, over his pale, bony chest, his stomach, his back, and the backs of his legs. Arturo turned to say something, something serious, but she was up off the towel and running to the water. Arturo smoked a cigarette and watched her legs disappear under the surface of the sea.

That night, standing on the Bridge of Sighs, in his polite, reserved manner of asking for things, he asked her to marry him. He asked, I think, for her "hand." She stared at him. He probably began to sense that something was terribly wrong. He was suddenly lightheaded and gripped the wooden railing.

PERU was an accident. The company originally intended to send me to Europe to hunt for hotels on the Black Sea. Farley was going to go to Peru. Farley was supposed to set up a

Peruvian tour for East Coast Americans who were tired of wintering in the islands or in aging, rumpled Florida. Then Farley discovered he was infested with intestinal parasites he'd picked up in Africa. For a day or two, we were afraid Farley was going to die. He was hallucinating, and he didn't recognize familiar faces. I was fearful, even though I didn't know Farley very well. One of us would be abroad while the other was at the home office, or we would both be abroad at the same time, in separate countries and usually on separate continents. Yet we did the same thing for the company—we set up foreign tours—and that meant there was some sort of bond between us. For two nights, I slept in the visitors' lounge near Farley's hospital room.

As Farley hovered near death, it became apparent that he was a man with no family and no friends. No one came to see him. No one called. There was no one the company could get in touch with in case of emergency—Farley hadn't supplied a name.

I found Farley's loneliness a frightening thing. I stood at the back of his hospital room—one of the nurses let me do this—and stared at his gray, impassive, mysterious face. His eyelids fluttered, his lips twitched. I had the strangest sensation—I wanted to lift Farley up. I wanted to take him in my arms to see if it was true, this feeling I had that he was weightless.

When Farley began to respond to medication, Bob Ford, the company's overseas-division vice-president, sat down beside me in the hospital hallway and said, "You're going to Peru."

I said, "Farley covers Latin America. That's Farley's thing."

He said, "Go in that room and take a good look at Farley." He shrugged.

"Christ," I said. "My Spanish is like a child's."

"Don't worry," he said. "Use that to your advantage. Play helpless."

I went home to pack. I lived in a small, cluttered studio apartment in the city's east end, on a block of brick buildings facing the harbor and the airport. It was a fifty-stair walkup, so you always ended up climbing down and up a hundred stairs to go buy something or go see someone. I had a television set, a cassette-player, and a telephone with an answering machine. After a long trip, I'd come home and play the tape and there might be four or five messages: my parents (they lived on the other side of the country), the dry cleaner's, a girl I'd seen a couple of times, a wrong number that stayed on the line.

FIRST FIRE OF THE SEASON

Blessed is the word igniting now
under the green spitting wood alive with insects.
Blessed the names, dissembled, falling,
blessed their miraculous erasures.
How quickly a nest would burn this evening, the shell-

embedded down, the underweavings.
How quickly become a fist of fire opening
midair, plummeting.
When I was a child a falling star meant *someone's dying*—
that terrible luck of knowing

seeding the dark, growing like prophecy,
as if some distant farmhouse light had gone out
for good in the imagination, some bird
jumped in its sleep, feeling
the dead pull of the migration.

—DEBORAH DIGGES

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My suitcase was in plain sight, still half full. After packing—lots of white short-sleeved shirts and lightweight khaki trousers—I sat in my apartment in the dark and saw Peru lying ahead. I didn't want to go. I was twenty-five, surprised to be set loose in the world so soon. When I got into bed, I thought of Farley lying in his hospital bed. Sometimes I'd lie in a bed somewhere and wonder what city I was in and did I know that city very well or pretty well or not at all and did it matter. The few real conversations I'd ever had with Farley, that's what we talked about—cities.

Lima at first sight was like an old, faded woman reclining in dust. Central Lima is a soiled relic, full of flaking churches, discolored stone façades, warped Spanish balconies, hotels past their heyday. Noise is everywhere, and dust. Dust flourishes. If you dust off your shoes at noon, they're dusty again by one, and there is so little green to be seen that many people compensate by buying green cars and painting their houses and fences green and calling things that aren't green green.

In a few days, I had accumulated piles of Spanish documents from hotel managers, travel agencies, airlines, baggage handlers. I found a translating service in a broken-down building a few blocks from my hotel. A girl sat behind a high counter. She had shoulder-length black hair—a shiny black, with flashes of red. She was thin—a genetic kind of thinness, I guessed. Her wrists were so thin she had to wear children's fake-silver bracelets. She was wearing a red dress decorated with huge black monkeys, birds, and fish. I needed some hotel contracts translated, some letters, some brochures. I tried out a little Spanish on the girl, to tell her I needed help. Tears streamed down her face. I saw them fall off her face like tiny transparent stones. She turned away. She couldn't look at me.

I said, in English, "Have I insulted you?"

She said, not looking up, "What's your name?"

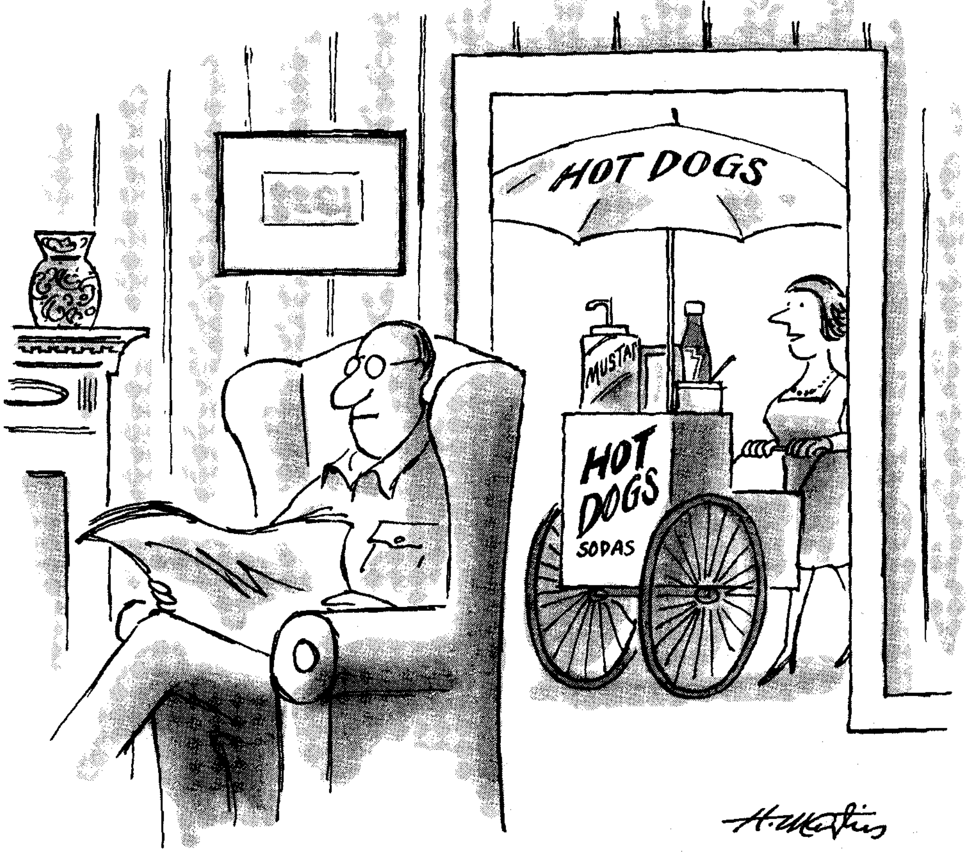
"Tom," I said. "My name's Tom."

"Tom," she said.

She took the documents without looking at them. She said she was closing. She told me to come back in two days.

Two days later, when I went back, the girl said the documents were still in the hands of the translator. She said that the translator hadn't been feeling well, that his heart had a murmur.

When I showed up the next morn-



"Supper's almost ready. I hope you didn't just grab a hot dog for lunch."

• •

ing, the girl said the documents were nearly translated. The translator had just called. Everything was proceeding. She asked me to have coffee with her on the Plaza de Armas—the translating service would pay. We walked to an empty café and sat by the window. We could look out and see the guards in front of the Government Palace and the carved angels on the eaves of the cathedral. We sat in silence. I could tell that she was purposefully willing the silence and that she wasn't going to allow anything else. Her jaw was set and her eyes shone.

I said, "I should go back to my hotel. I have things to do." I said it angrily, in a harsh voice.

That night, she called me in my hotel room. "I have news," she said, and it struck me how nearly flawless her English was. "The translator, Señor Barón, is ill. Very ill. His sister has called us from the clinic on the Avenue Arequipa. But she says he has finished your work and that it is very good work. He is very proud."

"I'm sorry about the translator," I said.

"His sister will bring us all his work tomorrow. Can you come to our office at ten o'clock in the morning?"

The office was dark at ten. It was still dark when I returned at eleven, but I decided to sit in the doorway. The girl came just past noontime. She carried a parcel wrapped in newspaper and tied together with string. She turned her key in the lock and pushed open the iron gate that guarded the entrance. She said, "Your documents are here." She gave them to me. She said, "We're closed today. You can pay later."

Sometime in the early evening, there was a knock on my hotel-room door. When I put on my shirt and opened the door, I saw the girl standing there with an older woman. At first, I thought it was the translator's sister. Then I saw that the woman's face bore a resemblance to the girl's—the same slightly hooded eyes, the same sharp cheekbones. The woman's hair was kinky and a mixture of white and black.

"This is Eda," the girl said. "My mother's sister."

The woman squinted at me and then smiled shyly. "She's forgotten her eyeglasses," the girl explained. When Eda spoke, it was in Spanish. Her voice was low—a little like a man's. I didn't understand what she said.

The girl said, "We are sorry to disturb you. Were you sleeping? We are sorry if you were sleeping."

"Let me get my money," I said.

After I paid, I said, "Please thank the translator."

"He does good work," she said. "He loves English. He loves it like his own language."

Two nights later, the girl took me to a discothèque. In Lima, the discothèques are pitch-black, so no one can see who's with whom. We sat at a table, and as we sat there I thought that this must be the kind of darkness people talk about when they talk about the amazing darkness of underground caverns. After we had danced a couple of times, the girl sat very close and began telling me a story. She said it was a story about her Aunt Eda. She said that when Eda was nineteen she fell in love with a doomed man and never fell in love again. He was a twin, and he died in a car crash. When he died, his twin brother's hair went white overnight. White as snow. The twin brother asked Eda to marry him, but Eda said no, she just wouldn't be able to bear it. The twin brother's name was Jorge—George in English. Jorge loved Eda. Really, he loved her more than his brother had loved her. But Eda couldn't see that, or didn't want to see it, she was so blind with grief. For nearly twenty years, Jorge wrote Eda letters—hundreds and hundreds of letters—but received no replies. One day, still many years ago, Jorge was swimming at La Herradura and swam out too far. Eda was in her garden in Jesús María and she saw him, saw his face and saw the water and the things he must have been seeing under the water: gray fish and seaweed and a muddy darkness. She knew that he was drowning and she rushed to the beach in a taxi. When she got there, Jorge's body was already spread out on the sand. That night, in a dream, she saw his face and she saw him running toward her, and in his hand was another letter, freshly written.

—PETER GORDON

MR. DOLL

RED lilies sprang up in Anna Meredith's yard in King's Town around the end of September. The merest light rain that time of the year, and the bleached hot earth exploded with amaryllis. Naked ladies, the local people called them. First messengers of change from the torrid heat of Mississippi.

Anna and her daughter, Belle, lived in a small rented house on the rundown end of Confederate Street. No amount of effort on their part to paint the weatherboards and to pot up ferns for the front porch lifted the house from a look of shabbiness. All during the heat, young children from the block behind Anna trampled across her yard on their way to the store for sweetened ice and Cokes. Only once a year, when the lilies arose from the ground, like so much incense, was there a transformation: traffic stopped. The gentle trespassers, black and white, had been persuaded that the spidery blooms carried belladonna, which would make their hearts stand still.

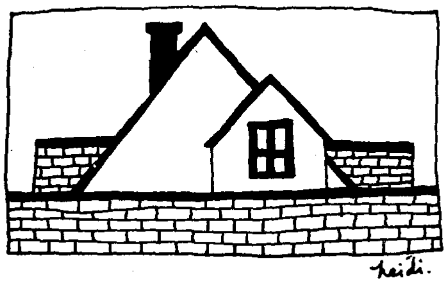
This year it seemed to Anna that the lilies were an omen of an even greater change than that of cooler weather—perhaps a change of fortune itself. Laurance Ingles, the adolescent son of old friends, was to come to her for lessons in piano and English.

The Ingleses and the Merediths had been close friends since Mississippi Territory days. They were just about the only Catholic families in Protestant King County. But whereas the Merediths had been loyal to the Confederacy and lost everything the Ingleses played cards with New Orleans friends who persuaded them to shift their funds to Manhattan banks before it was too late. When the currency of the South was repudiated, the Ingleses' wealth survived, and with it the tradition of generosity—in fact, they'd put Anna through Wellesley. Anna reminded herself of this. There was no telling how much it might mean that the two families were again in touch after this long while. In her generation, Ned Ingles had deserted the county right after his illegitimate son was born. True, he had been honorable enough to adopt Laurance and to have him baptized in an adjoining county. But then Ned actually ran away, leaving his elderly mother and the baby to the care of Roosevelt Frank, his Negro overseer. After old Mrs. Ingles died, Anna, a mother herself and soon enough a young widow, fell out of touch with things on Ingleside Plantation. For years nobody else heard anything from the absent owner—not even a postcard. The Protestant families she did occasional work for would ask Anna about him and she could answer nothing. The old Catholic-family link became an embarrassment; as it was, she had to play down her hereditary ties to the Church, to make a living as best she could among these people, sitting with their sick, or sewing, or teaching piano to ignoramuses. No Meredith would stoop to accept the public dole.

And now, with the advent of the lilies, Ned was back. She was the first person, according to him, he went to see. When she opened the front door of the little house, there he was, already perspiring and impatient, carrying a bouquet of fall roses, as if to invoke the past. At least to gracefully announce his return, dressed in a seersucker suit and looking hangdog.

Anna was stricken by his eyes. There remained only vestiges of the blue her memory had nursed from the days when she and Ned were young and she had prayed he would ask her out. She was just home from the three-dollar job of cutting the elder Mrs. Pettigrew's hair; the bedridden Presbyterian would have no other for this intimate ordeal. Fortunately, Anna had not yet changed out of her becoming navy eyelet into one of the faded housedresses.

She was too rattled to think straight. What would be the most tactful way out of the stickiness of their reunion? It would be silly of her to thank him for his family's old kindness. He could not convey her gratitude to those in the hereafter any more than she could. Yet the Ingleses, she remembered, liked to feel that they were benefactors. She stood awkwardly to receive his kiss on her cheek, which she suddenly imagined to be prematurely wrinkled. Then her clearheadedness—what she called her Massachusetts mind—came to the rescue. Men didn't really care to see or hear anyone else. Ned must be wondering how *he* looked, how *he* sounded.



"It is wonderful you are here," she said. "Will you be staying long? And how is your son?" Never mind that it was the son who had caused him to flee the county—here he was back home and at her door and talking in paragraphs.

"Your welcome is such a relief," he said. "In the post office a while ago I was gaped at. No one spoke. People I've known all my life. What's the matter with this county?"

She must forgo the temptation to answer his question sharply. "They should have had a welcoming committee," she said, smiling and stretching out her arms for the roses. "Come in, dear, and tell me how you are."

Well, first of all, he said, he was home for good. "On the spur of the moment I resigned from the university. I locked up my apartment in the French Quarter, ran over to the St. Louis Cathedral just long enough for an Act of Contrition, and here I am." He turned even more serious. "It's for Laurance's sake I'm home. Roosevelt sent me a photo of him. He looked awful. Hope to God it's not too late. I've bought him a convertible—"

"Oh," Anna put in, "he'll enjoy that."

"—ordered clothes. It's his English I need help with. You're the only one I'd trust to understand."

So he really did care about Laurance, after all. Anna settled him in one of her secondhand chairs, the Meredith rosewood having been sold for bread and milk during her long years of poverty.

Ned was still talking. "The convent'll pull him through Latin and algebra. Of course he is tops in catechism. Worships the sisters with all their nonsense. But Anna dear, he talks like a bush baby. Wait till you hear him. Graduating, and you can't understand a word he says. All those years on the place alone, probably. Nobody around. Is what caused it."

She smiled because Ned still spoke in the old slipshod way himself, forever missing the mark. "I should have kept track of him," she said. "My husband died years ago and I haven't got a car. But I could have asked him here for cookies or something. My daughter Belle is in his class." Belle had never been interested in answering any of Anna's questions about the boy.

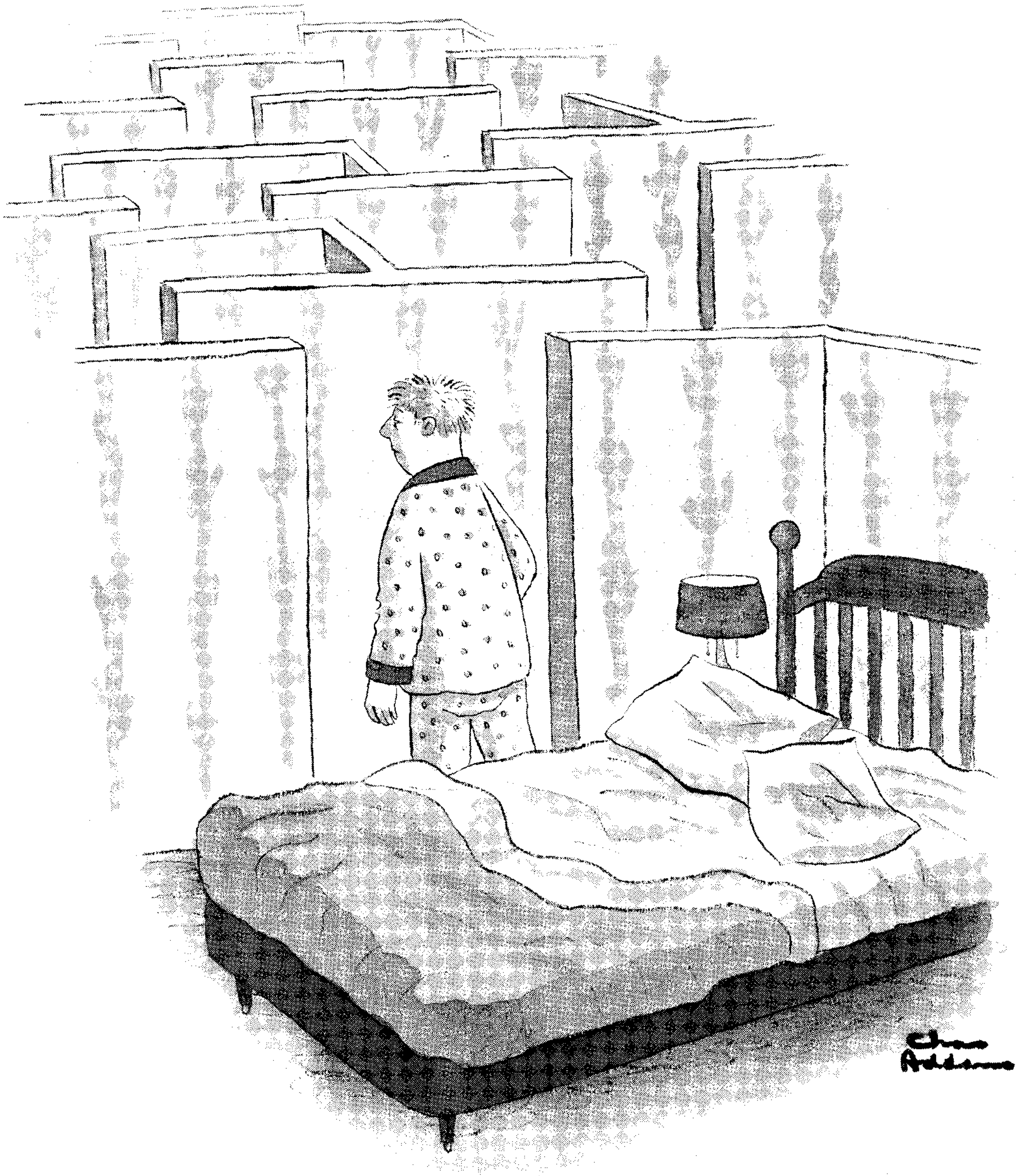
"A daughter?" he asked, looking

provoked. "That's how far I am behind the times. I don't think I ever heard. But I've been so wrapped up in New Orleans. My courses on Milton, and then publishing that article on 'Paradise Regained.' So much research! Don't ever get into scholarship."

Anna promised that she wouldn't. "But I'll always be grateful to you all for sending me to Wellesley."

He seemed more at ease. "Oh, yes. We did, didn't we? Our pleasure. Now I'm concerned about the boy and his schooling. He's too religious. Takes the nuns at face value. To tell the truth, and let this go no further, he wants to enter the priesthood."

Whenever Anna had seen Laurance in King's Town, he had a shrunken look. And now her first thought was that this explained it, and not some latent disease. She made bold to put a hand on Ned's shoulder. "My dear," she said, "they go through stages. It's probably one of those stages. Belle wants to be a medical doctor, and without a cent for tuition. Just a stage."



He jumped up and moved out of range of her caresses, stepping over to the Meredith daguerreotypes on the Knabe square piano, then turning to the awful painting of Captains Ingles and Meredith, of the Mississippi Dragoons. "*Au contraire*," he said. And his voice was sad and deep. "Laurance is absolutely determined. I caught up with him by the phone bill. Calling seminaries the sisters tell him about, to see if he can visit. When all I ask of God is to squeeze him into Tulane for a couple of semesters so he can come home and marry somebody nice. Have a houseful of children." Ned's eyes had a scattered look as he moved to sit back down. "How did you like the North?"

"Ned, I loved it. Such a privilege you all gave me to get out of Mississippi."

"Well, I wouldn't dare send Laurance up there, even on an endowed chair. He would starve to death trying to order lunch."

"But passes Latin?"

"Skids by on what he knows from the liturgy. That's the sisters. Do you know"—he lowered his voice—"what Roosevelt says? The boy never stayed home at night. Laurance. At night, mind you. Stayed with first one colored family and then another. People on the place. Whoever was having ham is what they tell me. Totally absurd."

"I wish I could have helped. It was hard to know how to."

Her sincerity must be sinking in. He stared about, agitated, and then got up and put his arms around her. "I am totally to blame," he said. "Guilty as hell. Anna, if you can get Laurance out of this mess—it makes me sick to tell you. The Negroes, they call him Mr. Doll. They are that cozy."

After Ned left, Anna tried to think things out. There was usually some reason behind a nickname. It sounded sinister, but maybe not. She felt herself becoming even more confused. The Protestants were right—a man who would abandon a baby. And now it would be all over town that he had stopped at her house. She calmed herself by eating some of the meat loaf intended for supper. Look here, the issue was cut and dried: either she refused to see Ned again and kept her reputation, so that she would have her odd jobs from the mudslinging élite of King's Town—but how could she do that?—or else she became a part of the ongoing Laurance scandal and looked to Ned for support.

When her daughter came home

from school that day, Anna had made up her mind. “Nothing but good can come of it,” she explained to Belle. “The Merediths and the Ingleses are very loyal to their friends. The Ingleses have practically supported our family ever since the Civil War—my great-aunt, my father, then me.”

Belle always changed her uniform and put on an apron to help with supper. “And what made them stop?” she asked.

“They didn’t stop on purpose. Ned has been away in New Orleans, a professor of English there. He knew nothing of our troubles. Now he is taking us up again in your generation. Let’s be thankful for the chance to help. And what should I have Laurance read? Reading aloud will help him.”

The girl was terribly hard, her mother had to admit. Well, straight A’s in school, an expert calligrapher and interested in the sciences. Now she was downright scornful of Laurance, and of her mother’s hopes for the future. “Laurance Ingles,” she said, “is completely outside the pale. If he read anything, it would have to be ‘Dick and Jane.’ ” Laurance was hopelessly dumb, she contended, and not even personally clean.

“And whose fault is it?” Anna asked. “Who has come to us begging forgiveness, asking us to help as if we were family? A rich and sophisticated man who sees his error. A dear old friend who never married, with nobody to help him but us. You know, we are almost exactly the same age, he and I.”

The girl was never idle, and at that moment she bit off the mercerized thread she was using to sew on a button. “This is mighty sudden,” she said. “All this old family jazz.”

It was only her youth, Anna thought, that made her shortsighted. What better way for the last Merediths to overcome their humble position in King County? The Ingleses were their kind of people, with the same nuances of taste, and the fortune to back them up. Laurance was bound to have some of the past’s gentility. Let it go—Belle would see, with time.

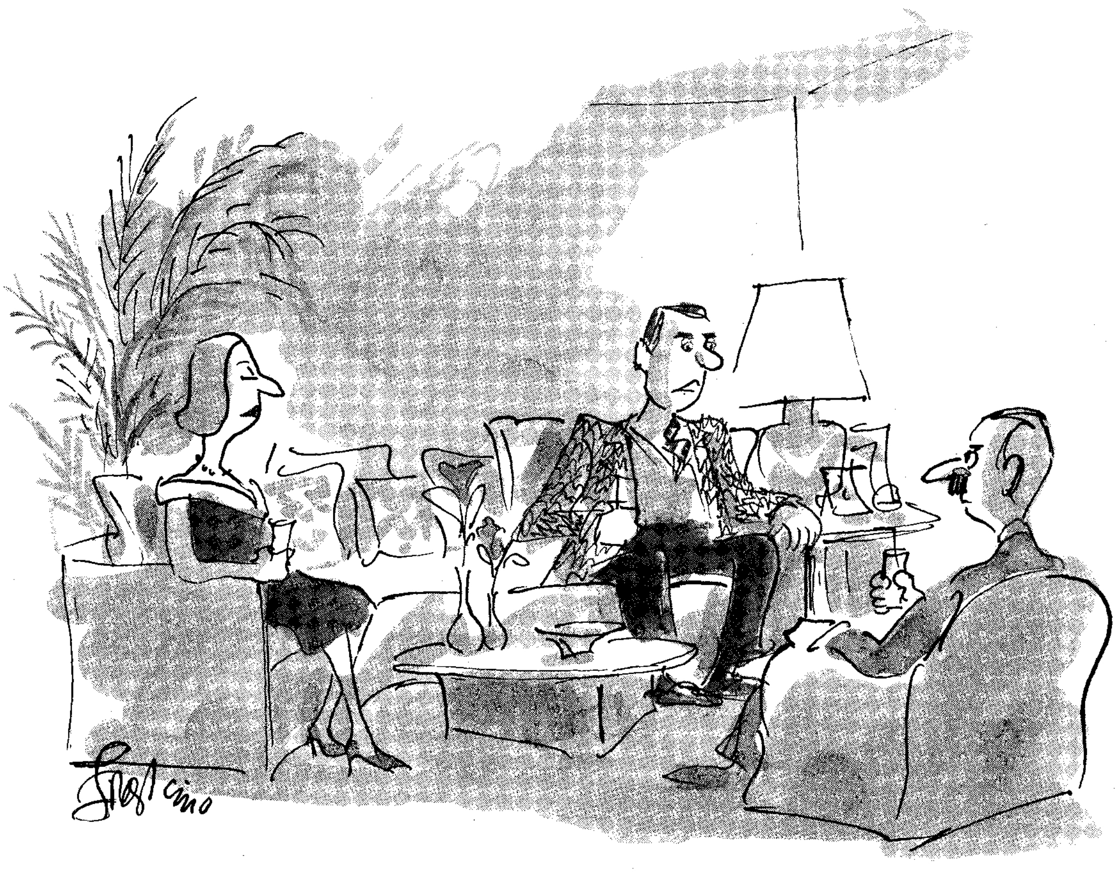
ALTHOUGH his father had indicated that Laurance would come to the Merediths’ the next day, it was old Roosevelt who knocked on the kitchen door. Taken aback, Anna told herself that he could be a gold mine of information. Roosevelt was imposing-looking—tall, straight, with handsome features. But he ruined it all with a chronically mopey expression. He knew of Anna’s importance, had bowed to her through the years when they passed each other in King’s Town. This morning his errand was to deliver a box from the plantation—cream, eggs, fresh figs. Ned must have sympathized more than he let on. He really was a good man. Spoiled, perhaps, but now reminded of the Meredith plight and assuming his role as this generation’s provider. She imagined emotions of pity and tenderness coursing through him. He hadn’t cared much for her when they were young, but now he might feel different.

Anna urged Roosevelt to come in and have some coffee. But he stood on his dignity, hanging back. He had alfalfa down, he said, and he needed to grease the baler and get the hay up before it rained. She had to bully him with compliments: people said he was able to make money when other farmers fell behind, was known as far over as Louisiana. “How is it,” she asked, “that you succeed at farming in bad years as well as good?”

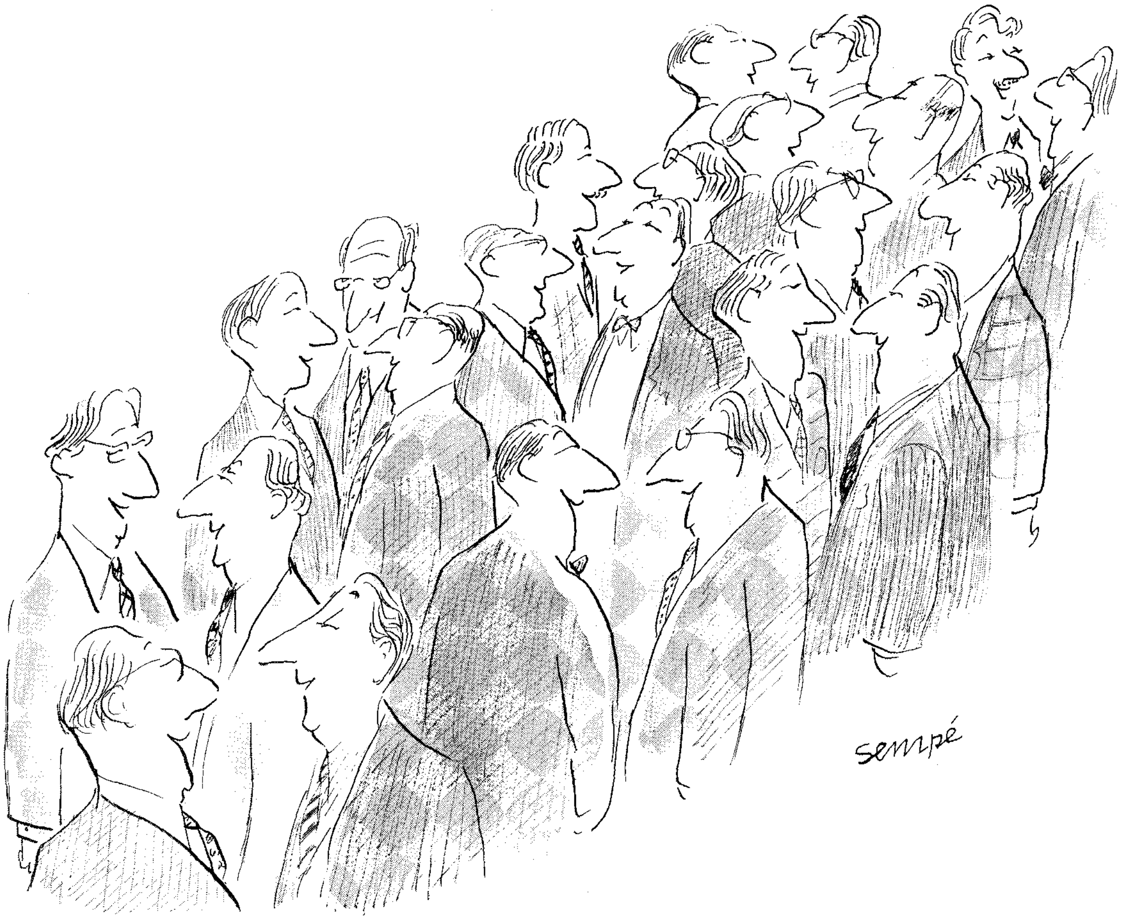
Embarrassed, Roosevelt succumbed and perched on the kitchen stool for a cup of coffee. “It’s cotton and soybeans,” he said. “I raise aplenty of both and keep them growing. Tend to my equipment. Don’t allow no butting in.”

It was funny he talked the way he did, Anna thought, when she knew he had graduated from Hampton Institute—the Ingleses used to educate everybody, black and white. So this must be an act he put on. As soon as she could, she broached the subject of Laurance. “Mr. Ned’s been to see me. He mentioned the picture you sent. He feels terrible about Laurance growing up alone out there on the place.”

Roosevelt startled her by interrupting in a most impertinent tone. “Is that what he says? Let him dare up to me with it then. I check on Laurance day and night. Hear his prayers. Get him off to school. Jack him up every way I know how.” A hasty acknowledgment of all



“Myra is adamant about only one thing—creative control.”



"How's Louise?" "Very well. And Eva?" "Say hello to Jill." "My best to Anne." "How's Mary?" "Give my regards to Michelle." "Love to Kate."

this did not improve Roosevelt's temper. "Buy his clothes at the Syrian's, his firecrackers even, so as he can have Christmas." Roosevelt was breathing hard, unused to talking back, bless his heart.

"You've done so much. You're a saint. Everybody says you are a saint. But Laurance has to go to college now. In New Orleans."

"Laurance have to go to priest's school," Roosevelt stated. "Laurance going to be a priest."

She began to perceive that Ned was really up against a stacked deck in his hope of continuing the family through Laurance. And he believed that she was the only one who could help.

Roosevelt was continuing. "His papa buys him a convertible. You, Ma'am, supposed to give him lessons. Laurance don't need all that. Laurance just crazy about God, that's all. Anything to do with Jesus Laurance love."

With his lines down so pat, it was hard to intrude, but she must find out more. "Is it true," she asked, "that he lived with first one family and then another on the place?"

For a moment, Roosevelt was silent, probably hesitant to divulge details. "Yes, Ma'am. Anyway it started out with him come here so sweet. Didn't anybody want him but us after his grandmother passed. We made a lot of him. He was the only one white, and he kept a cold. We carried him everywhere, Ma'am, took turns with him. Everybody call him Doll. When he was six we tried to send him to the white school, but the children in the rest room held his head in the toilet and flushed."

"Good Lord." Trust the black version to be melodramatic. "So you carried him to the convent?"

"Yes, Ma'am. Our pastor did. The sisters taken him right away, first grade. The sisters tell him God love him and Laurance say then he all out for God." Roosevelt laughed. "Different ones of us say Doll, you love us, don't you? He say no, God have to do. And pretty soon he say don't call me Doll anymore. But we keep on anyway. Just, we call him Mr. Doll."

So there was nothing behind the nickname but affection for a child.

SEVERAL appointments were made and disregarded before Laurance finally showed up. And when he did, instead of driving the lovely convertible she and Belle had seen parked in King's Town he came to Anna's house on a horse. In the front yard, he dropped the reins and slid off. The horse, baffled by lilies, stepped delicately between blooms, then stood in one spot with its head down to point out that it was waiting. Laurance did not knock at the door but picked up a branch from a fallen tree limb and tapped on the porch floor country style. "Hello?" he called, and his voice sounded reedy, somehow double, as if it had an echo in his chest.

Anna had warned herself to be natural and offhand. The boy must be half wild. And never mind the amaryllis. "Come right on in, Laurance, and close the screen. The flies are still bad. Won't your horse wander off?" How small and frail the boy was.

"No, Ma'am," Laurance said. "It's ground-tied." He handed her a small glass jar with an ornamental top, then slumped into the nearest rocking chair. "Sister's selling it," he said. "It's holy water."

"How much is it?" Anna asked. "I'm not sure I have the change right now."

The boy waved his arm impatiently. Why, he had Roosevelt's ugly expression. "I don't charge nobody," he said. "They bill the place the end of the month."

"Isn't my little girl in your class, Laurance? Belle Meredith?"

It was plain that Laurance didn't want to be there, much less answer questions. His eyes, despite their muddy grounds, were a peculiar vibrant blue. "About is," he said at last. "Real tall, yellow hair?"

He was rubbing his back against the wicker of the chair. Odd as he was, he looked somehow strangely at home in the world. And Anna was the one who had determined to be natural. "Your father tells me you could use a little help with your English."

Laurance sat there and didn't say anything. The small dark hands played with a rosary he had pulled out of his pocket. "I can't have no lay teacher," he said finally. "Anyway, Sister says I'm going to graduate."

To be cut off so quickly. But it would be fatal to try to detain him or to argue. He had already stood up to go. "Thanks for the holy water," Anna said. "I'll sprinkle it."

Why, this boy was as flippant and autocratic, just as self-centered, as his father, and without the good looks or charm. It was hard for her to figure out the next step, if there was to be one. The very idea, acting as though he had the authority to say no.

WHEN Ned Ingles dropped by to stash away a case of Louisiana whiskey, he didn't seem to know that the proposed English lessons had fallen through. Roosevelt, he complained, was a hopeless moralist about hard liquor. If Ned went to buy any at Natchez-Under-the-Hill, some idler there would spot him and tell on him.

He poured himself a drink and got a second wind. "I have seen Belle in King's Town," he reported. "She is a lovely child. Entirely too lovely for Laurance, but otherwise perfect. Why don't you ladies come out home for Sunday dinner? I want to do like Papa did and give the Merediths a standing invitation." And he promised that Laurance would pick them up on his way home from Mass in Natchez.

Progress. This was more than Anna had dared hoped for—reinstating the traditional Sundays at Ingleside that she had known as a child and growing up. Why not go back to the past, since she could see no future for her and her daughter without the Ingleses? Long after Ned had left, her mood was festive. It would be nice to take some little something to show their appreciation on Sunday. Drinkers hated confectionery. What about fancywork? She opened the chest where her embroidery had piled up over the years and took out a pair of pillowcases with butterflies in clover.

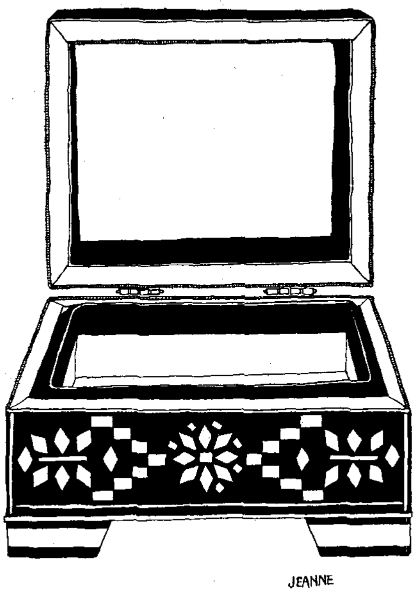
SUNDAY *seemed endless until* Laurance arrived in the convertible late in the afternoon, probably having been regaled by half a dozen manipulative nuns at their meagre Sunday meal. He looked exhausted, and crawled into the back seat of the car, ordering Belle to drive. He knew she ran the sisters' trash truck on cleanup days.

The old sunken road from town to Ingleside was, for Anna, a visit back past the years of struggle and anxiety. How incredibly peaceful it seemed. Patterns of sunlight and shadow fell on the dust bed of the road. Above their heads, on the banks, grew the oak-leaf hydrangea with its templelike blooms, festooned in Spanish moss. Anna pointed out to the children old overgrown cemeteries and the landmark magnolias along the Natchez Trace. Belle was polite, as always, but a little impatient and bored.

The moment the familiar old house came into view, half smothered in camellias, Anna decided on what must be. Her daughter would come here to live. Whatever was in the way—Ned's selfishness, Laurance's wrongheadedness, Belle's disdain for the boy—all would have to yield. It would have to be up to Belle. Her pale, reserved beauty was certainly lost on Laurance, but his father had already taken it in, Anna thought, and wanted it for the family. She, Anna, would keep her eyes lowered, as befitted a penniless middle-aged lady, and would follow the Jesuit precept that the manner is ordinary.

When the car stopped, Laurance woke up and complained that he was thirsty. He did not even show them in but disappeared around the back of the house at a trot. It was Roosevelt's pretty, Asian-looking sister who came out to greet them and to lead them into the parlor, at the same time yelling into the recesses of the house, "Wash your hands, Doll, hear?

"We don't know where he get the dirt from," she confided, lingering in the parlor to be their hostess, since no one else was present. But in a moment Ned appeared, flushed and affable. He had stayed up till all hours reading, he apologized. What a shame to miss their arrival.



It occurred to Anna that he thought everything he did, even something like this, had an element of charm. And so it did—or so it had, years ago when she was in love with him. "I had forgotten what a beautiful place this is," she began. "It has transported me back to my youth."

He agreed. It did him no credit, he said, to have been run off by a tempest in a teapot over a child.

Her mother thought Belle was warming up to the scene—polished walnut and mahogany, faded Aubusson rugs, touches of gold leaf everywhere. She seemed fascinated that plantation people could still live like this. Most of the rich back in King's Town had built ranch houses with automatic garage doors.

Ned grew expansive, telling about Ingleside. "Laurance will be the seventh generation here. This house goes back to Spanish rule, before the Louisiana Purchase." He hesitated. "But I could never give up New Orleans," he said. "I keep the old apartment in the French Quarter. St. Ann Street, right by the cathedral and Jackson Square. You ladies must avail yourselves of it whenever you can get away." Anna judged by Belle's startled look that the girl did not understand he only meant a kindness. "There'll be no one there," he said hastily, "until Laurance starts Tulane."

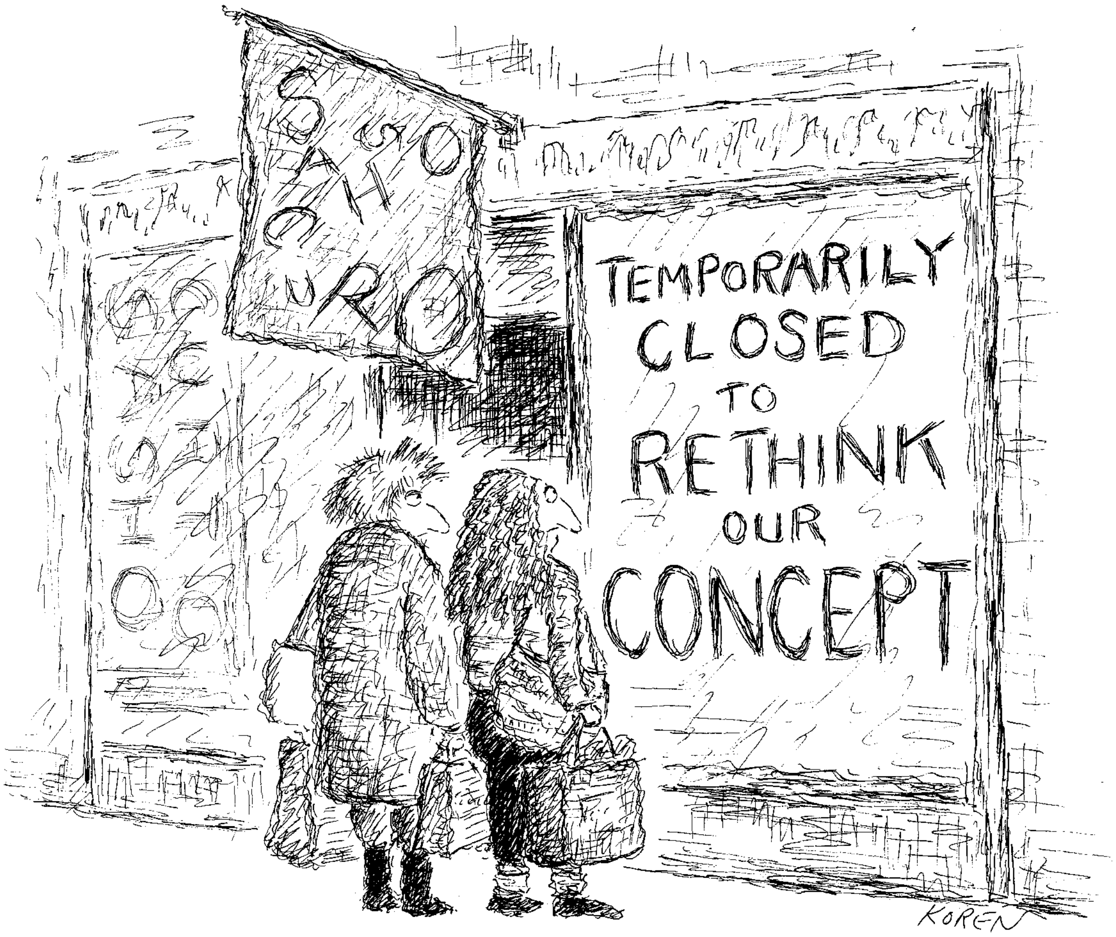
"Right here is heaven," Anna persisted. "So peaceful. And only two miles from King's Town. Those people just live to gossip."

Ned looked incredulous. "They couldn't talk about you, Anna. I let myself in for it. And then Mama not letting me marry Laurance's mother." He glanced apprehensively at the open door of the parlor.

"Of course. She was a cousin?"

"Of sorts," he said. He indicated by a fatherly frown his concern for discretion before the young girl, who at the moment had her back turned, examining a Waterford bowl on the whatnot. It was remarkable to Anna that everything in this house had stayed the same.

At the dinner table, Laurance behaved as if he were oblivious of everything. He drank beer while everyone else had iced tea, his father refilling


TEMPORARILY CLOSED TO RETHINK OUR CONCEPT
KOREN

Laurance's glass from sweating quarts on the sideboard. The boy hardly touched the tender beef and the vegetables, ignored the tomato aspic. "You see," Ned whispered to Anna, "We should have had ham." He labored at small talk, things that might interest Belle and catch Laurance's ear. Although his manner and attentions seemed evenhanded, Anna noticed that he had eyes only for Laurance. Mysterious, after such a long separation of father and son. Could a photograph have done all that? Ned would look at the boy and then avert his gaze quickly, but not before a slight change had remodelled his features. So that is how it is, Anna thought: Ned has reached that time of life when women are tiresome. And a boy—one's own boy . . . Well, Belle had decorative worth, anyhow.

As the cook served dessert—a Lady Baltimore cake that must have cost her half a day—Laurance stood up suddenly. He had to practice, he said, for the sisters' Christmas recital. Belle, apparently emboldened by Ned's warmth, thoughtfully took two pieces of cake. Soon the notes from the Steinway, clumsily progressing, made a travesty of Bach-Gounod's "Ave Maria."

Ned looked about in despair. "Anna, can't you do something? He hasn't the slightest gift. What did we send you to school for?"

She laughed, as if he were taking the sounds from the hall too seriously. "I'll see. That piece is hard."

Ned took a deep breath. "People who can't do anything else," he said, "go bonkers over religion."

"It's just the convent, sir," Belle assured him. "They force you into it, really."

He smiled at her with what could be his first real look. "They haven't forced you, have they?"

She didn't know how to respond. "Well, I have other plans," she said. "I hope to get a scholarship. I'm very good in science."

"Oh, God." He turned slightly, as if to an audience. "She is good in science. My dear, if there is anything more wearisome than religion it is science. Couldn't you get good at making rémoulade sauce or growing orchids?" He shook his head and then got back to his subject. "I can't influence Laurance right now—he's not thinking clearly. He's got a crush on this thing—won't admit the ecclesiastical humbug. And he doesn't even have the background they'd require. When he gets turned down by the seminaries, he'll probably kill himself."

Anna protested. "No, indeed! Despair is a sin against hope! Where is your catechism?"

Laurance's father was finally amused. He took a deep breath. "You're right. He wouldn't sin. No, Ma'am. If it's sin we're talking about, then suicide is out."

After the table was cleared, Ned took Belle off in a jeep to look at the herds and the fields. The girl was becoming more relaxed. Anna couldn't tell what Ned's attitude was, one way or the other. She took slow steps going through the old familiar rooms, peeking into the chapel, where a coffin still stood on end in one corner, covered with the Chinese forbidden embroidery she remembered from her childhood. This place, this house, had waited for her whole. She could step back into an anachronism if she didn't falter. At last, she walked silently into the space and order of the wide central hall. Once she reached the piano, she put a hand on Laurance's shoulder, which he arched slightly, as if to get the most of her touch. He looked haggard.

"It's that same mistake," he said. "They just say practice."

She made a pleasant noise of agreement. This was like being near a wild thing, she thought—harmless in itself but unpredictable. "There's no other way," she said.

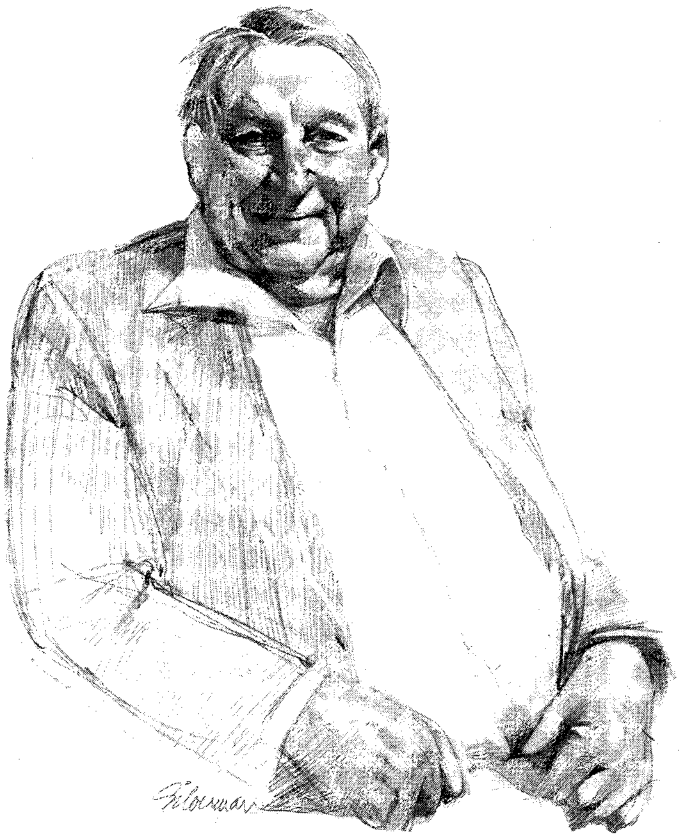
She stood beside him another few minutes, until he paused to rest. "About the seminaries," she began timidly. "I know a few people back East. One is a Trappist—that's the old Cistercians—and one's a Servant of Mary. Do you think your father would let me introduce you?"

He looked up, and his eyes narrowed with sudden interest. She had his attention. "Of course, they will be more likely to talk to you," she said, making her voice reassuring, "after a semester or so at Tulane."

—BERRY MORGAN

PROFILES

BOY WONDER—I



NICOLAS SLONIMSKY is continually driving his daughter crazy, and it's not just because he named her Electra, although that certainly didn't help. To hear Slonimsky tell it, he chose the name because it means "amber" in Greek, or because it contains "good hard letters" like "E" and "T" and "R" missing from his own name, or for some such reason. "But can you imagine what it was like growing up as a kid in Boston with a name like that?" his daughter asked me recently, seeming palpably to shudder at the memory of the experience, though it's over forty years past. "That name was a blight, a plague—it was like lugging around an extra leg, or having another eye sprouting out of the middle of my forehead. You know how terrifically cutting kids can be, and naturally they're going to grab on to something like that." But it's *not* that. Nor is it because of some of the other—well, peculiar aspects of her upbringing. For instance, the way her father insisted on conversing with her almost exclusively in Latin during the first five years of her life. This is one aspect of the enterprise which Slonimsky himself—a spry, animated, and exuberant ninety-two-year-old who is considered to be one of the foremost musical lexicographers in the world—seems particularly to savor to this day. "Yes, we'd have long conversations," he told me when I was visiting him a few months ago at his home, in West Los Angeles. "I'd imparted to her a vocabulary of several hundred words, and they were part of the lingua franca of our household: *auris*, *oculi*, *fenestra*, *nummi*. Visitors were always tremendously impressed by her precocity. Over time, she became somewhat ambivalent about it, I suppose. Once, she picked up a feather and held it out to me. I dutifully told her, '*Pluma*,' and she countered, 'No, Daddy, the way Mommy would say it!' And then, one afternoon, she came home and angrily announced, 'Daddy, it's not true! *None* of the other daddies speak Latin to their kids at home.' After that, she'd simply stare at me blankly whenever I tried to revive our Latin conversations."

Electra is not charmed by the tale. "It was basically a trained-seal act," she says, dismissing her apparent precocity. "I mean, what does it take to teach a child what is basically the wrong word for something? In fact, if anything, it was a mild case of intellectual child abuse." Electra is likewise uncharmed by her father's delight in recounting his experiments to determine innate predisposition toward either consonance or dissonance in music. "I was curious whether people automatically start out by favoring consonant musical experience or whether it might be possible to pattern an infant toward a preference for dissonant experience through some sort of behavioral conditioning," Slonimsky recalls. "So, for a while, whenever I was home alone with her and she'd awaken crying for her bottle I'd immediately rush over to the piano and launch into some lovely Chopin nocturne, utterly ignoring her urgent entreaties, and continue to play like that for about a minute. Then I'd pause for a moment, pound out ten seconds of the densest Schoenberg, at which point I'd immediately hand her her bottle." The experiment appears to have worked, though perhaps not as Slonimsky intended: Electra reports that today, notwithstanding her remarkable genetic inheritance from her father, she finds herself entirely unmusical. But none of that is what drives her crazy about her father; indeed, she reports that while she was growing up she generally found her eccentric dad vastly amusing and great fun to be around.

No, what exasperates her is her father's seeming inability to make anything of his career; his endless tendency to squander his immense talents; his ongoing failure to focus. That and his total lack of self-discipline. It's a surprising indictment, especially since on the surface her father appears a man of overwhelming accomplishment: his résumé, if he were any longer bothering to keep one, would include sterling achievements as a piano accompanist to several world-renowned singers during the twenties, as secretary and "piano pounder" to the conductor Serge Koussevitzky (first in Paris and then in Boston), as a professor of Slavic languages at Harvard University, as a composer of considerable distinction, and as a pathbreaking conductor who introduced and promoted some of the foremost compositions in the canon of avant-garde music—all this before, quite late in his career, he launched into his new vocation as a musical lexicographer. The charge of indiscipline seems especially untenable. In the past couple of years alone, Nicolas Slonimsky has managed to bring out three new books: the Seventh Edition of Baker's Biographical Dictionary of Musicians (with more than thirteen thousand entries spread across more than twenty-five hundred double-column pages of miniscule type); a Supplement to his authoritative "Music Since 1900," a day-by-day "descriptive chronology" of musical birth dates, death dates, première dates, and all sorts of musical arcana; and his translation of a major Russian biography of Alexander Scriabin.

Most surprising of all, however, Electra's is an evaluation that Slonimsky himself shares, endorses, and even amplifies. "You see, I *am* a failure," he says bluntly. "It's true. My life has been an enormous disappointment." He reaches for a huge sheaf of typed pages stacked on a nearby table. "Here," he says, plopping the pile in my lap. "I've even acknowledged as much in the title of my forthcoming autobiography." "Failed Wunderkind," the manuscript's title page announces portentously, in boldface, and, beneath that, in a lighter typeface, the subtitle "A Rueful Autopsy." The cloud of seriousness has fled the room, and Slonimsky is beaming. "Autopsy, yes? That's precisely correct usage. Not the dissection of a body, of course. Rather, from the Greek: that's *auto*, 'self,' and *ops*, 'eye'—hence, self-observation. You can look it up. The publishers are dubious, but I told them they could look it up, too." (I subsequently did; the publishers may have a point.)

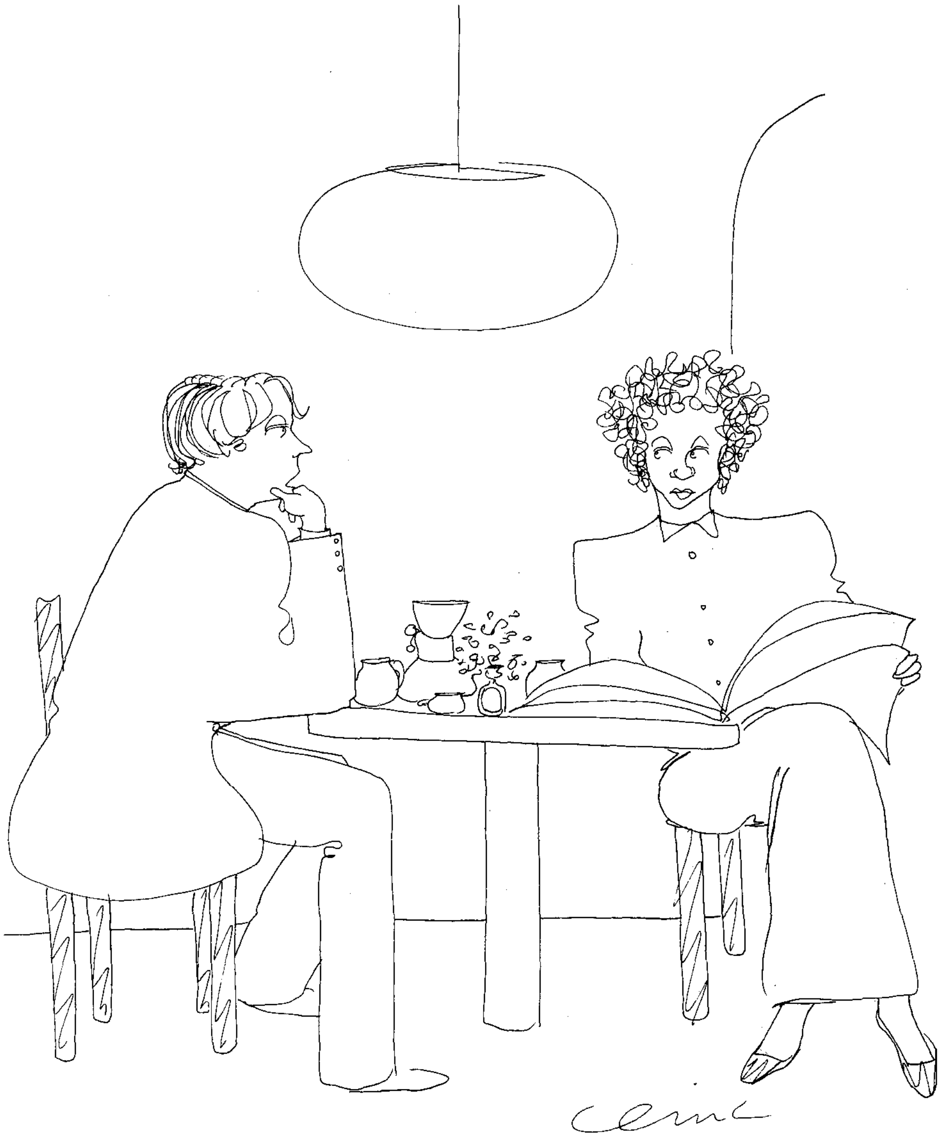
With Slonimsky, it's hard to tell: he's cheerful and expansive almost all the time, and perhaps that façade indeed merely masks interior desolation; on the other hand, his sense of the tragic undergirdings of his life, whenever he does allow himself to show it, almost immediately melts away to reveal an antic humor, grounded in a yet wider perspective. In any case, whether happy or sad, content or disillusioned, he is continually and freshly open to the wondrous structure of language itself—be it musical or verbal—and through the grace of this linguistic fascination he is at all times momentarily on the verge of transport.

THE first chapter of Slonimsky's autobiographical manuscript has just appeared in *Grand Street*. "When I was six years old," it begins, "my mother told me I was a genius." Paragraph break. "This revelation came as no surprise to me." Slonimsky's putative genius had an air of inevitability. Indeed, he reports a few paragraphs down, "So precocious was I that even before I was born and before my gender was determined, I was named Newtonchik, a diminutive Newton."

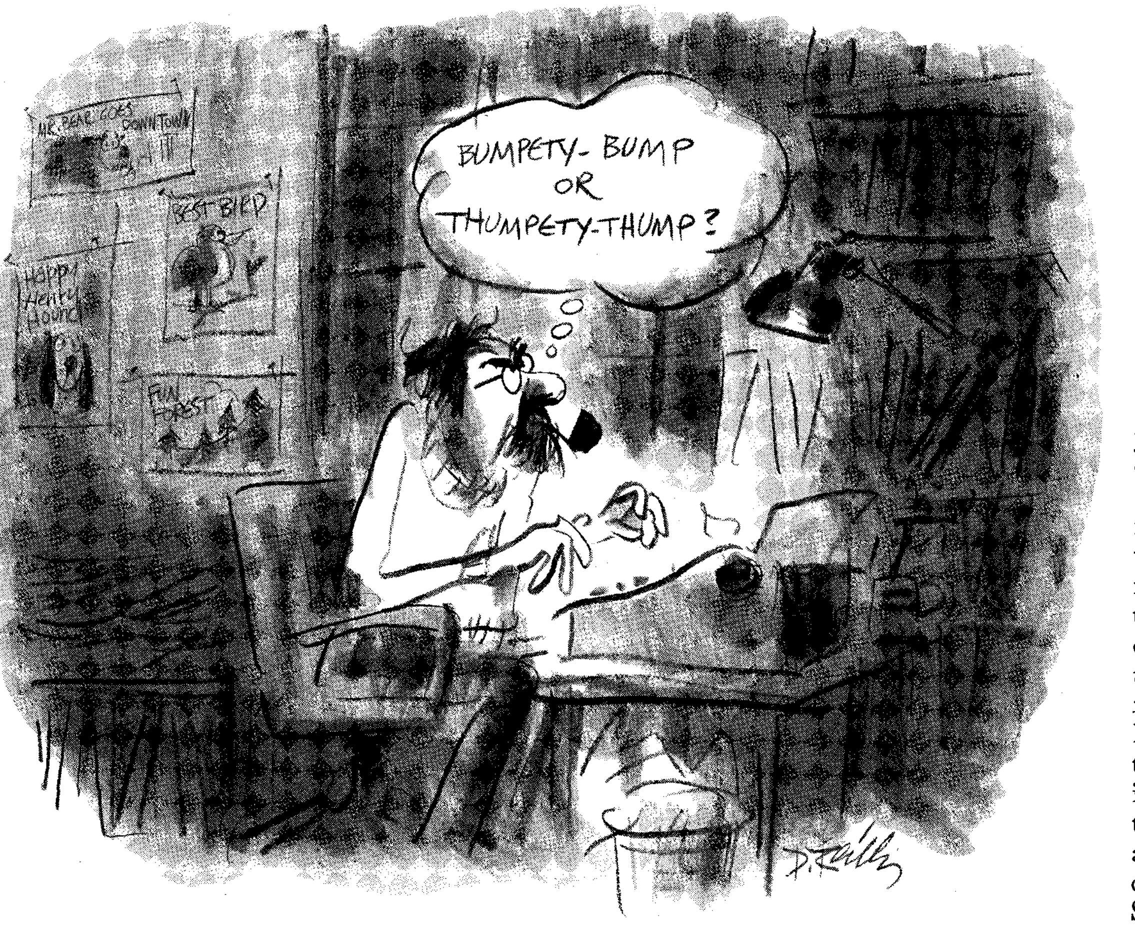
As we sat talking in his living room, Slonimsky told me, "My family, you see, had been a hotbed of geniuses for generations. All my ancestors were intellectuals. They could never learn any useful trade—they devised useless languages, concocted futile mathematical formulae, invented devices for which no one could conceive the slightest employment. In short, my family were model specimens of that extraordinarily peculiar and uniquely pointless species the Russian intelligentsia."

Los Angeles seems a long way from St. Petersburg, where Slonimsky was born, and 1986 a long way from 1894, the year of his birth. And yet he seems at ease there, and he certainly doesn't look—or behave—like a man of his years. "The other afternoon, I went to the movies, as I often do," he told me at one point, "and the cashier refused to give me a senior-citizen discount unless I produced some valid identification. I was so flattered I gladly paid full fare."

He went on, "Listen, I don't have *time* to be sick. I could use a good nervous breakdown, or even a cold, but I can't work one in with all my deadlines. Actually, though, I seem to be in good shape. A while back, during a physical, my doctor wanted to test my hearing, so he put some earphones on my head, sat himself down behind some complicated-looking machinery, adjusted his dials, and then played two tones, asking me which of the two sounded higher. 'Well,' I told him, 'the first one was 3,520 cycles per second and the second was 3,680 cycles per second. Is that what you mean?' He rechecked his dials and then looked over at me, dumbfounded. But, I mean, that was just sheer exhi-



"You know, since we got married I never see those leopard-spotted pants."

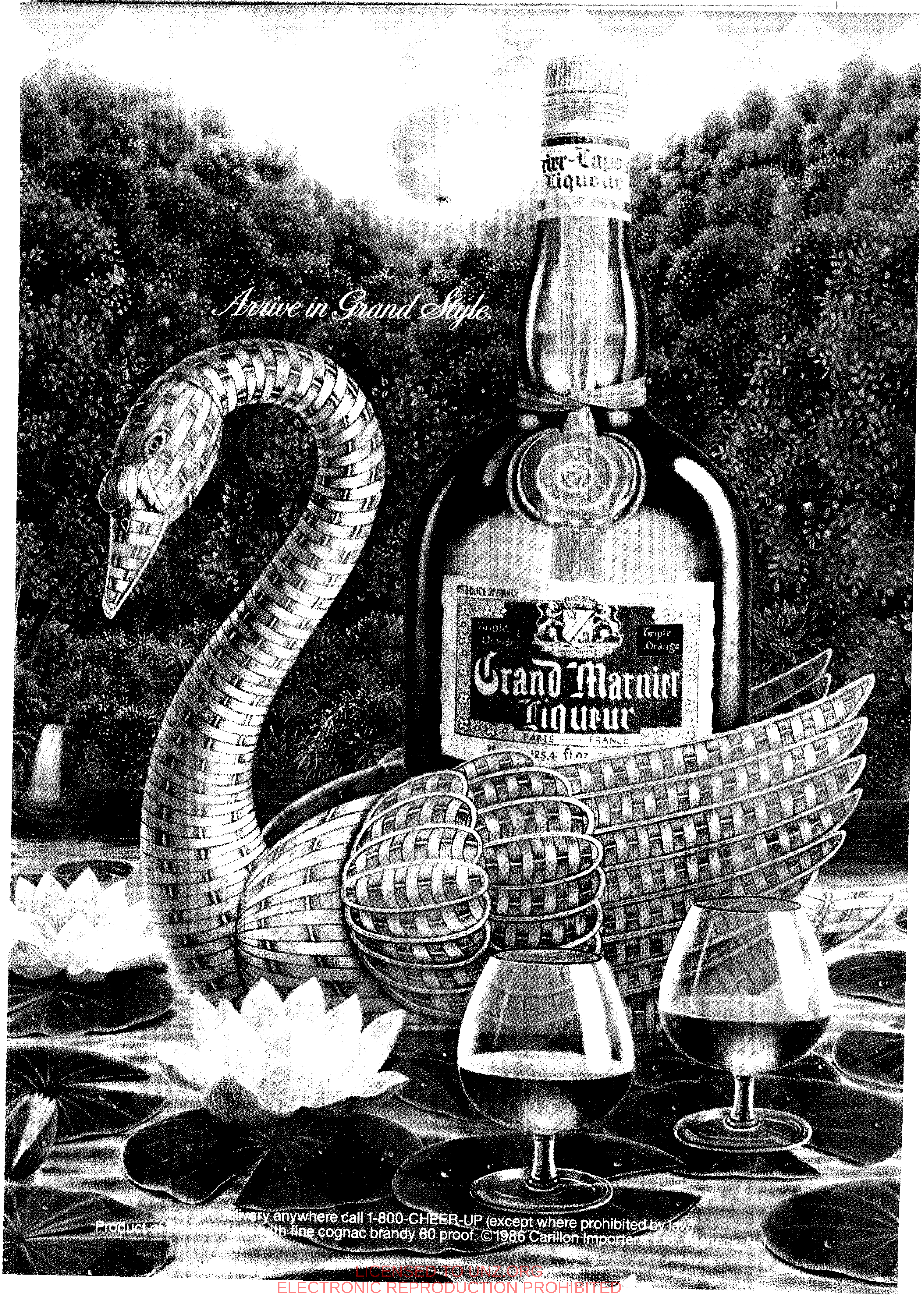


bitionism of the worst kind—an ongoing problem with me. Anyway, the point is, though I may not be endurable, I *am* durable."

Slonimsky lives alone—as he has since his wife's death, in 1964, when he first moved to Los Angeles—but over the years he has enjoyed the companionship of a succession of devoted secretaries and oblivious cats. The secretaries are invariably beautiful young women, the more innocent of culture the better, as far as he's concerned—although the current pair, Laura Kuhn and Dina Klemm, arrived on the scene extremely well read and musically sophisticated. In the past, Slonimsky has particularly savored his role as mentor, guiding the cultural tutelage of these wards, whom he and everyone else (including the young women themselves) refer to as his "odalisques." Month by month, year by year, Slonimsky and his odalisques have compiled their files and piled their galleys while the cats have lounged indolently about. "First," as one of the odalisques recalls, "there came Mango and Papaya. They were then succeeded by Dorian Gray, a gray cat who was supposed to age and grow old in place of Nicolas—*and did!* And now his latest cat, a fluffy black-and-white, is named Grody-to-the-Max."

"WARNING: HOUSE GUARDED BY ATTACK CAT," announces a scroll tacked to the white front door of Slonimsky's house, a light-green bungalow, which is one of a series of such bungalows in a quiet residential-tract neighborhood about a half mile from the Santa Monica Freeway. But the door is usually ajar, and the only thing Grody appears to be guarding is his own languor. The front door opens into a living room with beige walls and a beige carpet, on which a wooden rocking chair is pulled up close to a rectangular glass-topped wrought-iron work table in the middle of the room. Over to the side is a fairly beat-up upright piano, and on top of the piano, occasionally (not always), is a poster-size blown-up photograph of a human skull. "That is the cranium of one J. S. Bach," Slonimsky will inform you, if you can't restrain yourself from asking (though he's also perfectly content to hold his peace and watch you eying the photograph nervously). "Don't even ask me how I managed to dig it up—we haven't got the time." The walls all around Slonimsky's work table are festooned with a gallery of ghoulish nonsense—bizarre tabloid headlines, M. C. Escher conundrums, a reproduction of an 1853 painting by William Holman Hunt entitled "The Awakening Conscience," which depicts a male pianist reaching seductively toward a young, demurely clothed female student. ("When I was growing up," Slonimsky volunteers, "that image represented the height, the very pinnacle, of depravity.") Beyond the piano is a plain, not terribly well inhabited kitchen; through another door is the file room, with the odalisques' desks and typewriters; off down a corridor is Slonimsky's austere bedroom, with a narrow single bed facing a framed copy of Richard Avedon's famous photograph of a naked Nastassja Kinski, reclining seductively, draped by a huge snake. One of Slonimsky's odalisques got it for him, to replace a poster he used to have there of a heavily bearded old man, recumbent and seemingly asleep: Brahms on his deathbed.

Slonimsky is clean-shaven—a short man of odd shape. He has written of "the unfortunate lack of Grecian golden mean" between the parts of his body. He has the legs, shoulders, and arms of a slight man, and then, as he says, "where other people have their abdominal cavities, I have an abominable convexity." His belly balloons—the buttons on his shirts (usually plaid flannel) strain to contain their unexpected bounty (any shirt that fits him at the shoulders will at best barely suffice to encompass his midriff). But then everything tapers precipitously from the waist down: I'm sure he hasn't seen his belt in years, not even in the mirror. I have read rave reviews of concerts in the twenties and thirties in which he was said to resemble a "young gentleman out of Pushkin's Byronic pages" or, in another context, "Napoleon at Marengo." Today, he resembles a skinny tenor trussed up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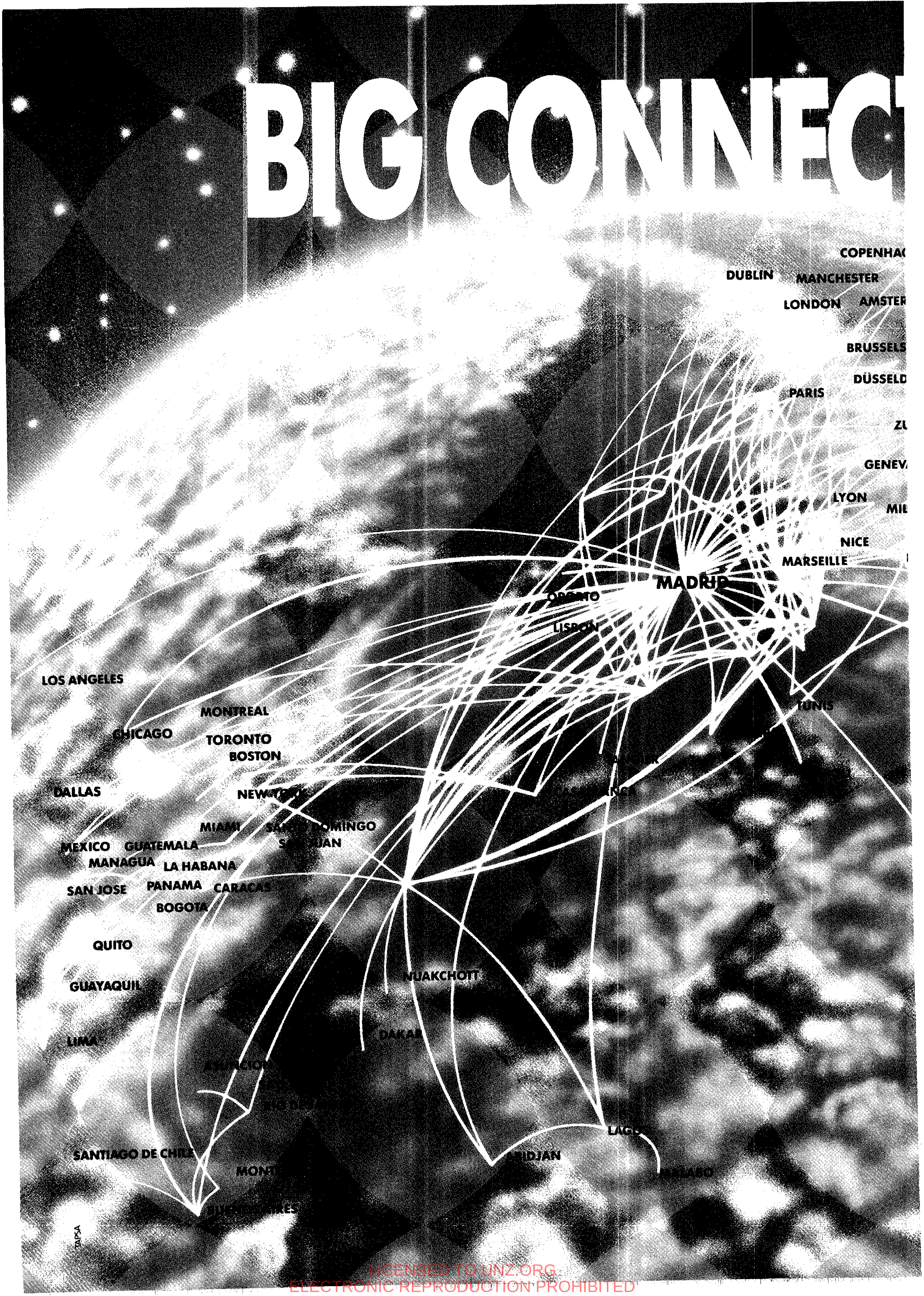
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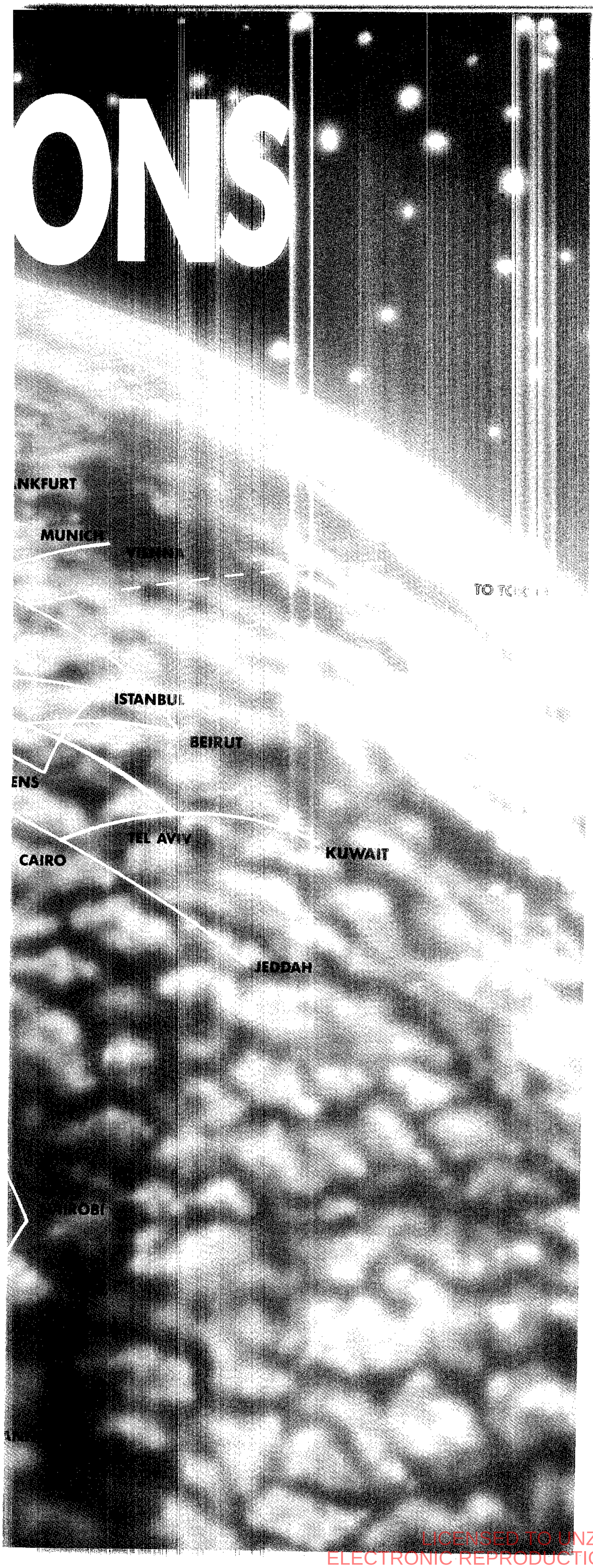

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with vast pillows for a stint as Falstaff. Walking, he pads along like a fat man, gingerly, carefully; talking, his arms and hands dart all over; seated, listening, he crosses his arms and rests them atop his belly as if on a bar counter.

His face is smooth, virtually without wrinkles, like a turtle's; it rests on a neck that is jowly, like a turtle's, too. He has a turtly beak nose, which swerves abruptly, halfway down, to his left, like a freeway on-ramp. It wasn't always thus: when he was a youth, his nose was beaky and *straight*, but in 1916, in Revel, the capital of Estonia, while serving as rehearsal pianist with a provincial opera company and walking across a darkened backstage area, he fell through an open trapdoor and landed on his back, entirely unscathed except for a chair he'd grabbed in falling, whose leg now stabbed smack into the middle of his face. No blood, but a crooked nose forever after. His wide, smooth forehead is crowned with a thatch of gray hair, parted virtually down the middle and shagged to either side. Down below, the forehead ends in two incongruously black circumflex eyebrows, which are seldom still. Nowadays, his eyes are milky blue, with large, cloudy pupils. People who knew him years ago have described his eyes as beacon-black, and perhaps they were darker then. They still seem to shine—indeed, they pierce.

His eyes pierce, but it's his voice that captures and holds. It is high and yet throaty, accented and yet clear and assured, somewhere between those of Dr. Ruth ("Good Sex") Westheimer and Clara ("Where's the Beef?") Peller. It is a voice that invites study—and, in fact, it has *been* studied, by one Charles Amirkhanian. Amirkhanian, the music director at KPFA, the Pacifica radio station in Berkeley, is also a poet and a composer. He is one of the leading American proponents of text-sound composition; that is, the manipulation of taped word and phrase fragments into musical form through repetition, acceleration, deceleration, cross-tracking, and so forth—a battery of advanced techniques that result, in Amirkhanian's case, in a sort of restless minimalism. On several occasions, he has used taped interviews of Slonimsky as raw material for his compositional forays. Being a percussionist as well, Amirkhanian likes to think of words as percussive objects, and he finds Slonimsky's words particularly easy to think of in that way. "He's always speaking with a lot of energy, from the gut," Amirkhanian told me one afternoon when I asked him to describe Slonimsky's voice. "He's always aspirating, enunciating, trying to make himself clear. He can't manage an American accent for the life of him—consonants are always intruding at the beginning and end of words. I called one of the pieces in which I used his voice 'Heavy Aspirations.' But the contour of the voice is remarkable: he punches the words out, as distinct entities, in extraordinarily complex rhythms—rhythms that I think are related to his musical rhythms, his conducting and piano rhythms. And then there are those odd things—for instance, the way that when he's thinking, or gathering his words, instead of a typical flat 'uuunnnhhh,' his voice goes through amazing extended timbral changes, like what you get with a Tibetan monk. It's a high voice but with profound authority. The high energy of the voice relates to the high energy, the boundless energy, of his life. He centers on a story and becomes full of himself, but in an attractive way: he's giving himself over to the listener through his voice."

"Your party just totally blew us away."

• •

As Slonimsky and I sat talking in his living room, he was still giving himself over to stories of his family background, in St. Petersburg and before. "Our family was, if anything, *plus Russe que les Russes* in our passion to be seen as members of the intelligentsia, because in fact we were just passing," he said. "You see, we were Jewish—a fact which my mother, especially, regarded with horrendous shame and tried to keep hidden from us children for years. Indeed, in our family there were two great taboos. The first was sexuality. One time, a doctor friend of my parents'

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was visiting and asked my mother how she was handling the topic of human sexuality with her three teen-age sons. ‘Sir,’ she interrupted him severely, ‘this is a *literary* family.’ And, indeed, there was no instruction on the topic whatsoever, except for the persistent admonition that kissing would lead inexorably and inevitably to syphilis, a prospect before which I lived in continual terror, not so much for fear of the physical consequences, which, I assure you, my mother had rehearsed for us in morbid detail ad nauseam, as out of the dead certainty that were I ever to contract the disease she would immediately broadcast my dread condition to everyone within miles.

“The other taboo, as I say, was Jewishness. We had all been baptized in the Russian Orthodox Church. I mean, we weren’t believers or anything; we were confirmed agnostics. Rather, the baptisms were part of a massive effort, especially on my mother’s part, to render us as Russian as possible. For instance, she named my oldest brother Alexander, after the czar who had been assassinated just two months before his birth, and I was named Nicolas, after the czarevitch at the time, who became the last czar, Nicholas II. My mother used to account for our obviously Jewish physiognomies by reference to our ‘noble Roman heritage’—whatever that meant. I was so protected from the horrible fact of our Jewishness that I used to imagine Jews were some ancient tribe, like the Sumerians or the Babylonians, and, in fact, one day, the story goes, I asked the poet Nicholas Minsky, who was married to my cousin (and after that to my aunt), whether any Jews were still alive. ‘I wish I could see a real Jew,’ I’m supposed to have said, to which he is said to have replied, ‘Go look in the mirror.’ Apparently, the hint didn’t take, because it wasn’t until I was fifteen that the traumatic revelation struck me with full force. I was looking my father’s name up in the Russian encyclopedia, and the entry opened with ‘Son of the preceding.’ The preceding turned out to be one Chaim Selig Slonimsky, who was described as an eminent Hebrew scholar and scientist. So it was true after all.”

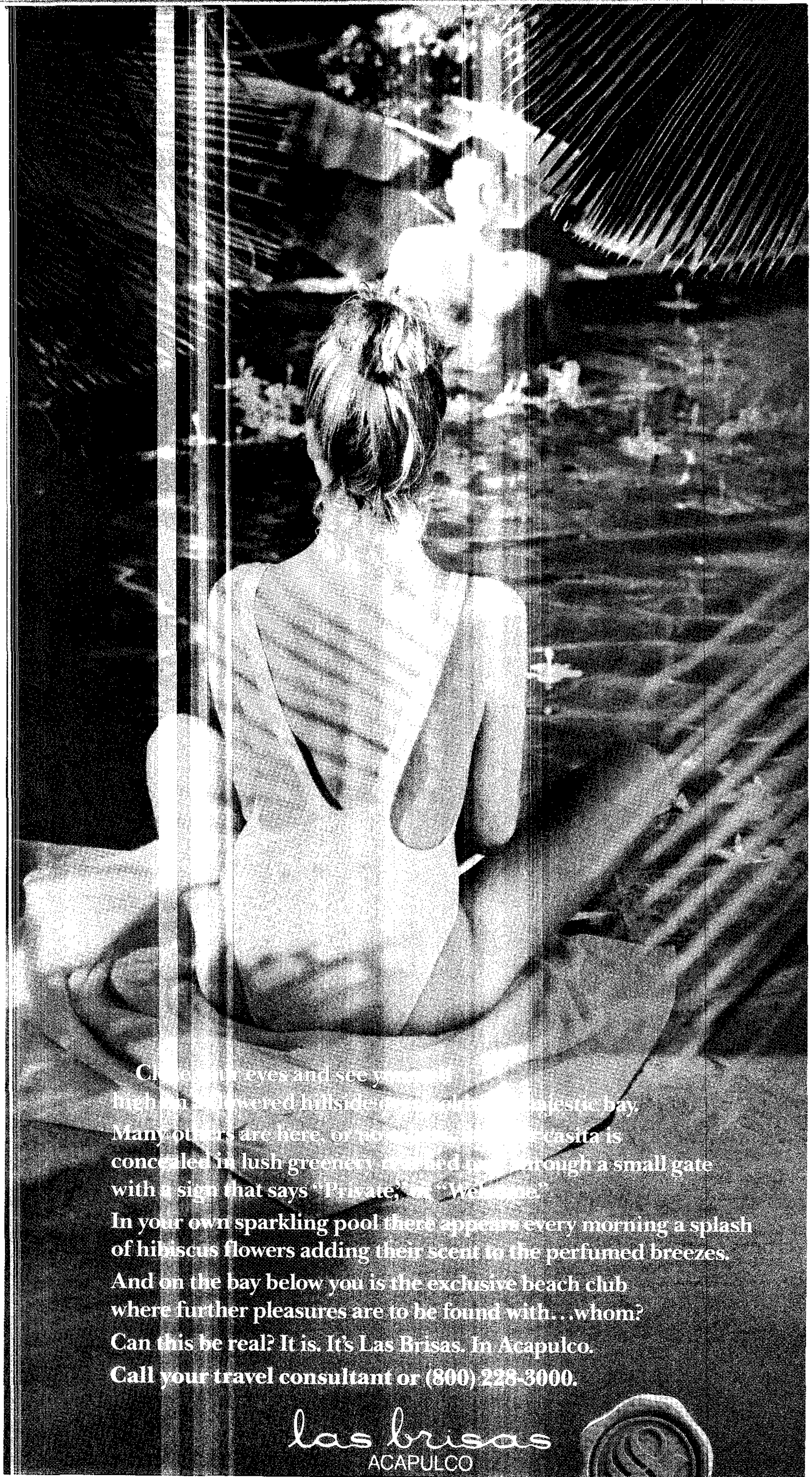
Nicolas’s father’s *grandfather* Abraham Jacob Stern was one of the first eminent geniuses on the Polish branch of Nicolas’s bountiful family tree. He was born in 1760 (just three generations separate Nicolas from the heart of the eighteenth century) and was renowned as the inventor of a sophisticated calculating machine—an early precursor of the computer or an awesome elaboration of the abacus, depending on how one chooses to look at it. “This device achieved such fame,” Slonimsky told me, “that my great-grandfather was summoned to bring his machine for an audience before Czar Alexander I, Savior of the Russians, Victor Over Napoleon, who was known to dabble in the sciences. He complied, and after he’d demonstrated the intricacies of the machine the Czar challenged him and the machine to an arithmetic contest. The Czar had previously instructed the court chamberlain to prepare a sequence of arithmetic computations—addition, subtraction, multiplication, division—and now the man read them out. My great-grandfather set to work at his machine; the Czar dipped his quill into a nearby inkwell and was just completing his first calculation when already my great-grandfather announced the final result. The Czar looked over at him, then at the chamberlain, who nodded confirmation as to the correctness of the announced result, then back at my great-grandfather and his machine, back again at the chamberlain, and then pronounced solemnly, ‘The machine is good, but the Jew is bad.’ ”

Stern’s daughter Sarah presently married Chaim Selig Slonimsky, who was born in Bialystok in 1810. Chaim Selig had pursued rabbinical and Talmudic studies alongside some remarkably precocious—and remarkably secular—scientific investigations right up through his nineteenth year, when, marrying Sarah Stern, he moved in with his new father-in-law. In subsequent years, he perfected Stern’s calculating machine, adding the capacity for extracting square roots. In 1862, he founded *Ha-Zephirah* (“Daybreak”), one of the first Hebrew-language periodicals, which continued publishing, in the spirit of the modern Jewish Enlightenment, until 1931. Chaim Selig Slonimsky has a prominent entry in the Jewish Encyclopædia, where he is credited with having popularized all manner of contemporary sciences for Polish and Russian Jews of the period. Nicolas had stories for me about this grandfather as well: “My mother used to say to me, ‘He was a genius, but an impractical one. Don’t follow in his footsteps.’ For instance, she’d tell me how one day, while puzzling over the question of instant communication from a theological point of view, he’d invented a prototype for an advanced form of telegraphy. But the act of invention appears to have satisfied him; he felt no need to publicize or patent his invention. ‘There, Sarah,’ he said to his wife, folding the sheet of paper and placing it high above a cupboard. ‘Let’s see how long it takes *them* to figure it out.’ And several years later, when word of the new invention was published, he reached for his sheet of paper, examined it, clucked contentedly, and announced, ‘Well, they got it right.’ Or, anyway, so my mother claimed. The amazing thing is that in more recent years the Soviets have taken to publicizing an identical claim on his behalf.” Chaim Selig Slonimsky died in 1904, at the age of ninety-four. “So,” his grandson concludes, “that means that I must still have a few years to go myself.”

Chaim and Sarah Slonimsky had three sons, of whom two lived out their lives in Warsaw and the third—Leonid, Nicolas’s father—eventually went to live in St. Petersburg. Leonid’s brothers, Stanislaw and Josef, were themselves fairly remarkable. Stanislaw was a much beloved doctor, and *his* son, Nicolas’s first cousin, was Antoni Slonimski, one of the foremost poets and satirists in modern Polish literature. Antoni was continually in trouble with the Communist authorities in postwar Poland. (The Communist Party chairman Wladyslaw Gomulka had at one time been a personal friend of his. But one day Gomulka questioned him about his relations with acquaintances in the former wartime London government-in-exile, and Slonimski replied, “Friend Gomulka, I cannot stand physical pain, so please don’t waste your time calling in your Star Chamber boys—just list my crimes and I’ll sign the confession,” whereupon the friendship came to an abrupt end.) “Something I learned just recently,” Slonimsky told me, “is that Antoni’s personal secretary in the years just before his death, in 1976, was Adam Michnik, this young fellow who went on to become such a leader in Solidarity. So nowadays when I'm being hounded by my publishers because of my perennial tardiness I plead with them, 'Yes, I admit it, I'm late, I admit to everything, but my cousin was like a godfather to Solidarity. Surely that must count for something!' "

Josef, the other brother who stayed in Warsaw, was "a linguist with a passionate obsession for completeness," his nephew recalls. "He knew every single European language fluently and passed his time composing phrase books for use by citizens of one country on their travels inside another one, covering just about every circumstance in every conceivable permutation. My personal favorite was the Norwegian-Yiddish booklet. Years later, Wanda Landowska, the Polish harpsichordist—now, *she* was some baby—told me a story about how one young man had approached my Uncle Josef inquiring whether he could enroll with him for six weeks of intensive Spanish lessons in preparation for an upcoming assignment in Brazil; my uncle complied with the request, the student progressed quite nicely, and on the last day, as the student left the apartment on his way to the train station, Uncle Josef turned to his wife and said, 'Boy, is that young man going to be surprised when he finds out it's *Portuguese* they speak in Brazil.' But, anyway, he is the one who devised that utterly forgotten, utterly forgettable language which he called Universal Romanic, which even lost out to Esperanto, the invention of a similarly obsessed contemporary of his in Warsaw, in that particular sweepstakes for futility."

The third brother, Leonid, moved to St. Petersburg, where he married Faina Vengerova, Nicolas's mother. Toward this bearded, fairly withdrawn and remote, but kindly father of his, Nicolas still harbors feelings of devotion and admiration, especially for his many scholarly publications, which, as a young boy, Nicolas imagined constituted the very pinnacle of worldly achievement. Leonid Slonimsky was the foreign-affairs editor of the liberal St. Petersburg journal *Messenger of Europe*. He was also the author, in 1890, of "The Economic Doctrine of Karl Marx," one of the first books on Marx ever published in Russia. "Tolstoy read the book and seems to have made extensive notes in the margins of his copy," Slonimsky



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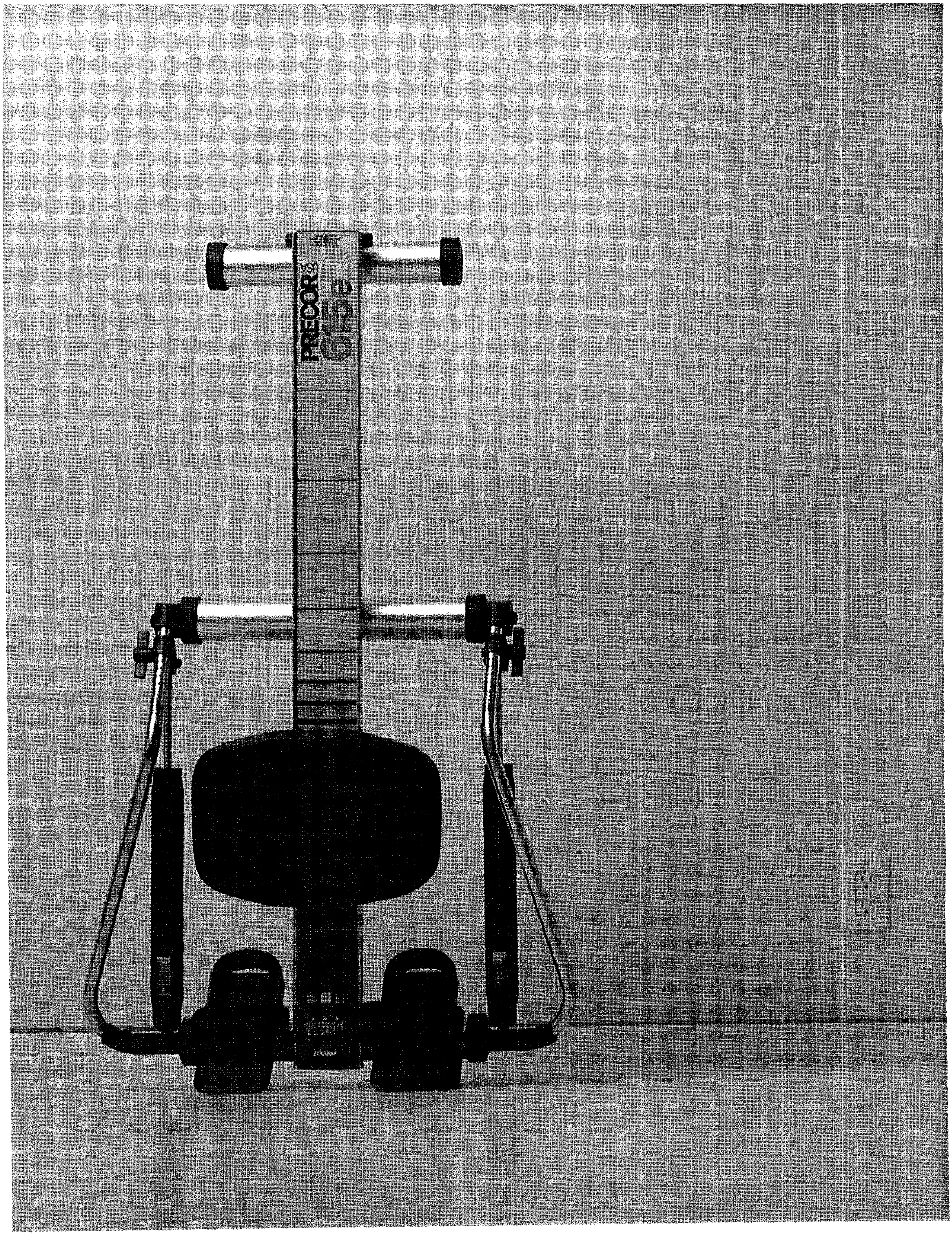
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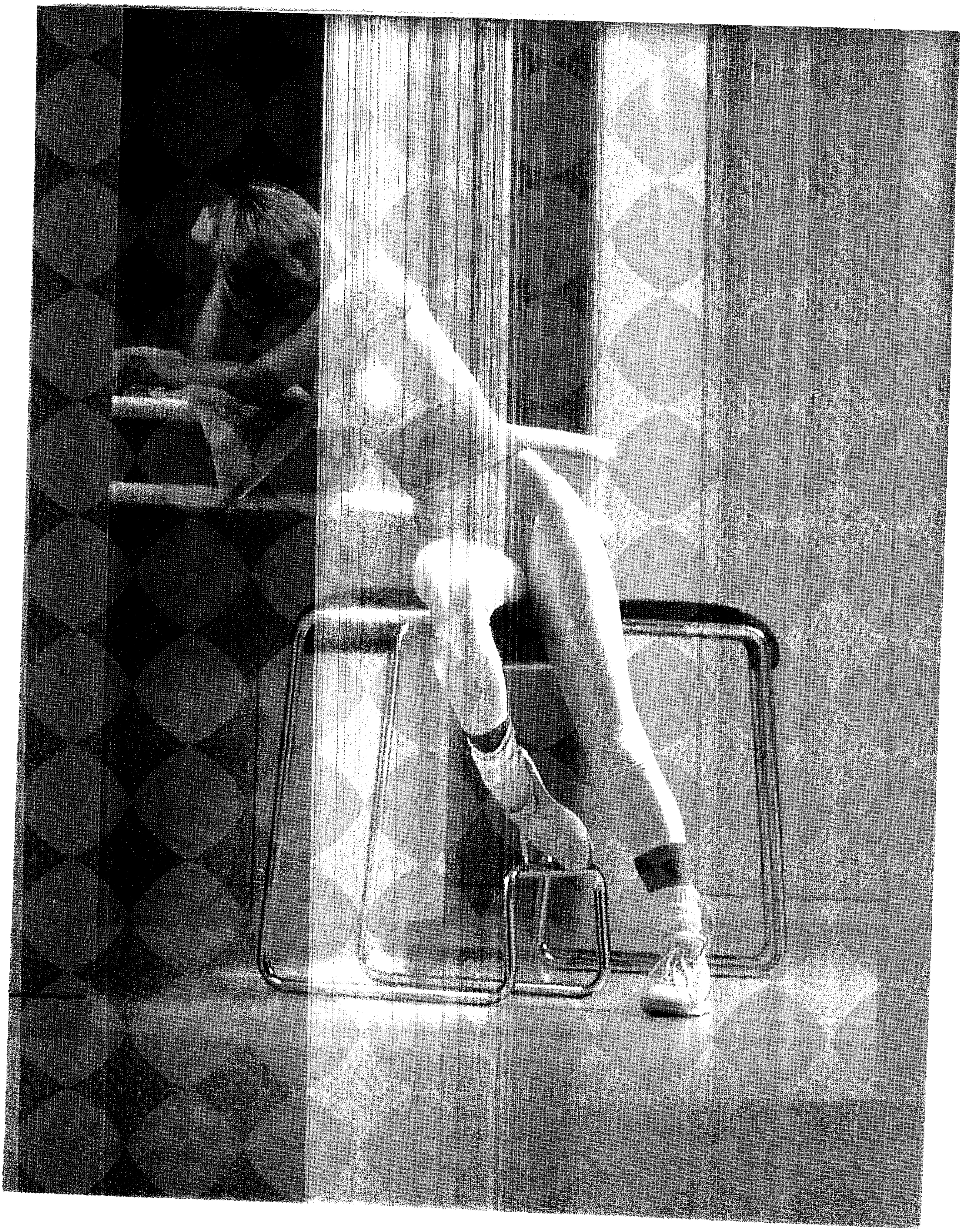

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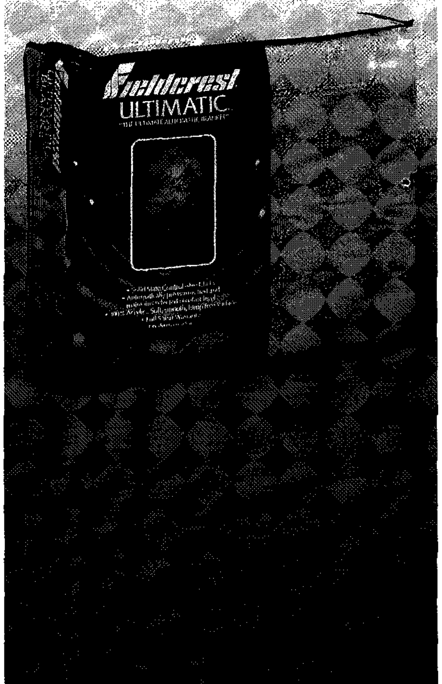

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says. "Lenin read it, too, and because of this my cousin Antoni years later told me—only half-facetiously, I'm afraid—that he held my side of the family responsible for the whole Bolshevik business. Lenin himself, however, had some pretty nasty things to say about my father. In a pamphlet published in 1894 in the Russian underground, he dismissed my father as 'an ordinary liberal, utterly incapable of understanding contemporary bourgeois society,' and argued, for good measure, that my father's soft spot for the idea of peasant ownership of small plots of land simply revealed his 'reactionary utopianism.' I don't know: with us he was always a mild, fairly befuddled man, with his head in the clouds, and his status entirely overshadowed by the huge, overbearing presence of my mother."

STADIUM PARKING

Faina's family heritage, as her son was finally able to ferret it out, years later, stretched all the way back to the Maharal of Prague (1525-1609), the great rabbi who was said to have fashioned the legendary Jewish robot known as the Golem. One of her second cousins was the renowned chess master Semyon Alapin. Faina's mother Pauline Epstein, married a rich Jewish banker, Afanasy Vengerov, had four children, and lived to a ripe old age, at which time she published a book entitled "Memoirs of a Grandmother" which became something of a Victorian best-seller. "In that book," Nicolas told me, "she included a scathing denunciation of her children who'd lost their faith, allowing themselves to become baptized, and then of the third generation, who, she said, 'feared neither God nor the Devil.' " Nicolas paused and gulped melodramatically, his eyes widening. "That's us," he then continued, in almost reverentially hushed tones, "my generation, the ones who feared neither God nor the Devil—that's really something."

Faina's brother Semyon was renowned in Russia as a professor of Russian literature, a tireless editor of Pushkin, and the compiler of a celebrated critical-biographical *cartothèque* of Russian writers. Her younger sister Isabelle Vengerova was a superbly gifted pianist, who contributed a great deal to Slonimsky's early development and, years later, after moving to America and attaining a professorship at the Curtis Institute, in Philadelphia, contributed even more to the careers of Samuel Barber, Lukas Foss, Gary Graffman, and Leonard Bernstein (who called her his Beloved Tyranna).

Slonimsky's mother became one of the first woman medical students in Russia, studying chemistry under the composer-scientist Alexander Borodin. But, to hear Nicolas tell it, she gradually abandoned that career so as better to be able to rechannel all of that inherited, imperative energy into wreaking domineering havoc on the lives of her children. The first of these, Alexander, born in 1881, became another noted Pushkin scholar; then came Julia, in 1884, also a future writer; there followed a decade-long hiatus—or rather, a series of perilous miscarriages—before Nicolas himself arrived, in April, 1894. "My mother continually assured me—indeed, she never for a moment allowed me to forget—that she'd lain in bed for a full year so as to effect my safe delivery," Nicolas recalls. "The extra three months were my mother's poetic license, for dramatic effect, but she never tired of reciting all the sacrifices she'd made on my behalf and denigrating the sad, pathetic recompense she'd gotten in return."

"Clearly, she was some kind of monster," surmises Slonimsky's own daughter, Electra, who never really knew her. Slonimsky himself is generally more even-tempered—or, at least, resigned—when he is describing her; that is to say, when he describes her as a monster he means it physically. "She was *huge*," he says. "Often, when we were kids, she'd call for us to come over to the bottom of the stairwell so as to help push her up the stairs."

After Nicolas, Faina gave birth to two more sons—Vladimir, in 1895, Nicolas's closest kindred spirit, who was to die of tuberculosis just after his twentieth birthday; and Michael, in 1897, who became a prolific and well-admired Soviet novelist. "And all of them," Slonimsky now said with a sigh, after completing the inventory of his predecessors and the members of his own generation, "they're all now gone. I'm the last of the Mohicans."

The first of Michael Slonimsky's many books—he produced more than a dozen before his death, in 1972—was titled "Lavrovy." Published in Russia in 1926, it was a model of Socialist Realist fiction, detailing the travails of a spoiled young bourgeois as he tried to adapt himself to the rigors of the Revolution. According to Gleb Struve's summary of the novel (in *Geschichte der Sowjet Literatur*, this passage translated by Robert Stevenson), to the hero "are opposed, on the one hand, the other members of his family—his vulgar domineering mother; his meek, henpecked father; his vain futile brother—and on the other, Fonna Kleshnyov, a true Bolshevik."

"Yes," Nicolas said, after I read him that plot summary one day. "The vain and futile brother, that's me. A not altogether inaccurate portrait." He paused for a moment, then smiled broadly. "What's interesting there is that as the years have passed I've ended up having to write about Michael's son, Sergei, who has become a leading Soviet avant-garde composer whose work is every bit as far out as the most outrageous stuff we've been able to produce here in the West."

AFTER another pause, Slonimsky resumed. "My nephew Sergei is interesting for another reason. He illustrates a curious pattern in our family line. For, you see, in our family it appears that the musical gene is transmitted across a series of chess knight's moves. Aunt Isabelle was musical, her sister Faina, my mother, was not, but I was. My own daughter isn't, my brother Michael wasn't, but his son, my nephew Sergei, turned out to be. This may in part explain in some mysterious way the course my life has taken. For, you see, with that background, in that hothouse atmosphere of the St. Petersburg intelligentsia, and especially under the pressure cooker of my mother's expectations, I was going to have to be a genius at something. And perhaps this knight's gene dictated that it be in music."

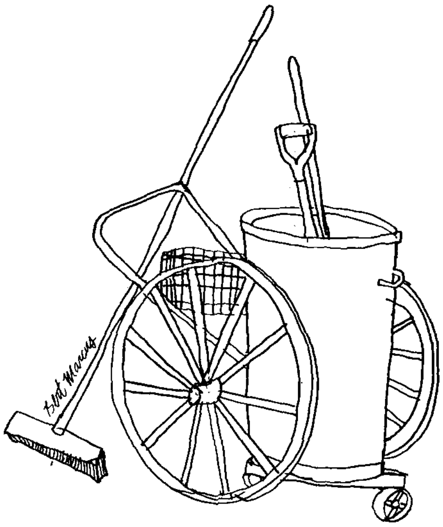
Indeed, there was no special musical emphasis in Nicolas's immediate household. "We were a middle-class, bourgeois family, typical of the late nineteenth century," he continued. "So naturally we had a piano, just as part of the furniture. But this piano quickly became my favorite household beast. You see, I possessed perfect pitch, and from an extremely early age I used to dazzle any and all comers by simply reeling off the name of any note—indeed, any combination of notes—that would be played for me. It all started out with this aspect of simply showing off."

When Slonimsky is in his darker moods—that is, when he is playing the theme of his self-estimation in a minor key—he sometimes asserts that it all ended there as well, that throughout his remarkable career he has simply been locked into a compulsive pattern of infantile exhibitionism. (Electra has been known to venture similar thoughts about him.) Without doubt, he still relishes astounding. One time, for example, while he was briefly in another room, I meandered over to the piano and mindlessly klimpered out a fairly complex and utterly inchoate sequence of nonsense chords—about ten seconds' worth. He came back in, I returned to my chair, and he went over to the piano and reproduced my sequence exactly, concluding with an elegant harmonizing flourish. "Sometimes," he said, his eyes twinkling, "it's best not to leave things unresolved like that, don't you think? Now, where were we?"

We were at his musical youth. "Ah, yes," he continued. "From a very early age, I was completely fascinated by sounds. I was as receptive to sounds as I was to objects, to toys, to the letters of the Russian alphabet. I would sit by, rapt, as my Aunt Isabelle gave piano lessons to my mother and my older brother and sister, none of whom were particularly musical. I'd approach the keyboard afterward and poke out elementary versions of the melodies they'd been rehearsing. She gave me my first official lesson on November 6, 1900, by the old Russian calendar. I remember the calendar itself, the look of the numbers, the configuration of black dates and red holidays. Numbers and arithmetical patterns were quickly coming to fascinate me as well. I was six years old, and my aunt was only twenty-three."

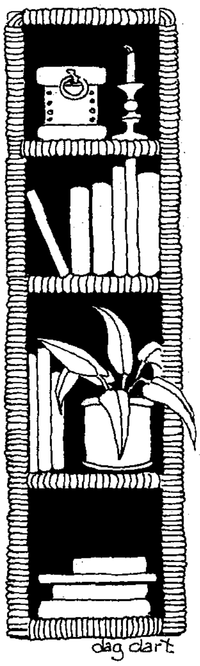
He continued his lessons with his Aunt Isabelle for several years, and his mother became increasingly invested in his precocity. Years later, he wrote of his first day at grade school, "My mother addressed the class, cautioning my schoolmates against coming into close physical contact with me or indulging in rough games which might be harmful to my delicate pianistic fingers. This speech led to the expected results, but I was not badly maimed." By the time he reached age fourteen, his aunt determined to enroll him in the St. Petersburg Conservatory. He was paraded into the rehearsal room to audition before the Conservatory's imposing director, Alexander Glazunov, who was at that time one of the reigning titans of Russian music. Glazunov was especially taken with the boy's virtuoso exhibition of perfect pitch, and at the end of the examination he announced that he was admitting him. At a subsequent exam, Glazunov recorded the top mark of 5 in his gradebook, with the parenthetical notation "Talent." "My mother immediately took to whispering the glory of this '5 (Talent)' to every visitor to our home, until it got to the point where the phrase itself began physically to repel me."

In school, Nicolas excelled in mathematics; he memorized vast swaths of Latin and recited them in exhibitionist extravaganzas. At the same time, he was attaining considerable pianistic heights: "I was able to get my Minute Waltz down to forty-three seconds." But now—and this was the beginning of the major crisis of his youth, one of the defining crises of his life—he started to encounter kids as gifted as he, some even more so. "The truth was I didn't like practicing, I wasn't very good at it, and as I began to reach high levels I came to realize I simply didn't have the requisite technique. I could master expression—my aunt, on her deathbed, said that no one could play Schumann as expressively as I could. I had very good *touché*, as they call it—a sense of which notes should be brought to the fore, which ones left in shadow, how to shape the piece, bring out the internal contrasts, how to express the structure of the work. But I didn't have the technique. And, as I say, I couldn't help noticing, with a jealousy that verged on panic, that other boys did have it. With growing horror, I watched as boys my age rose past me to prominence. One, in particular, I remember to this day: Pepito Arriola. I ask you—how could one ever forget a name like that? A young Spanish child, still in knee socks, *on*



tour, for heaven's sake—he was tan and chubby in a healthy, Mediterranean sort of way, I was skinny and pale in a neurotic, Russian sort of way. He dared to perform a recital of works I considered my own special province—Schumann, the Romantics—and he even got his name in the paper the next day! I'd never had my name in the paper."

Meaning itself began to desert Nicolas's existence. If he was not a prodigy, what identity could he claim? "Suicide was very much in vogue in St. Petersburg in the years before the war," Nicolas told me another afternoon, as we discussed this period of his life. "It had a certain aura. Russian romantic literature was strewn with convenient role models. And, as a stale nineteen-year-old wunderkind, I was in a fairly hopeless way. In addition, this business about sex and syphilis, all the terror associated with temptation, was becoming intense. Two of my classmates in fairly quick succession in fact succeeded in killing themselves, a circumstance that held me spellbound and which I took as some sort of omen or dictate. I conscientiously prepared, therefore, to hang myself in the bathroom, and, indeed, did so—only the hook in the ceiling gave way under my weight, and I collapsed ingloriously onto the floor, a wet, crumpled heap. So much for my pseudo-suicide, my fraudulent pendency. I guess I was just trying to call attention to myself."



Nicolas's parents proceeded to do what any members of the St. Petersburg bourgeois intelligentsia would have done if they had been faced with a like calamity: they bundled their son up and sent him straight to a sanatorium on the banks of the Rhine, where he could be cared for by specialists and cured by the fresh, clean air. I asked Nicolas about the results of the regimen of the ensuing months, and he answered, "Well, by age twenty I realized that I was not a genius, that it was no longer important whether I was a genius, and that what was important was to kiss girls."

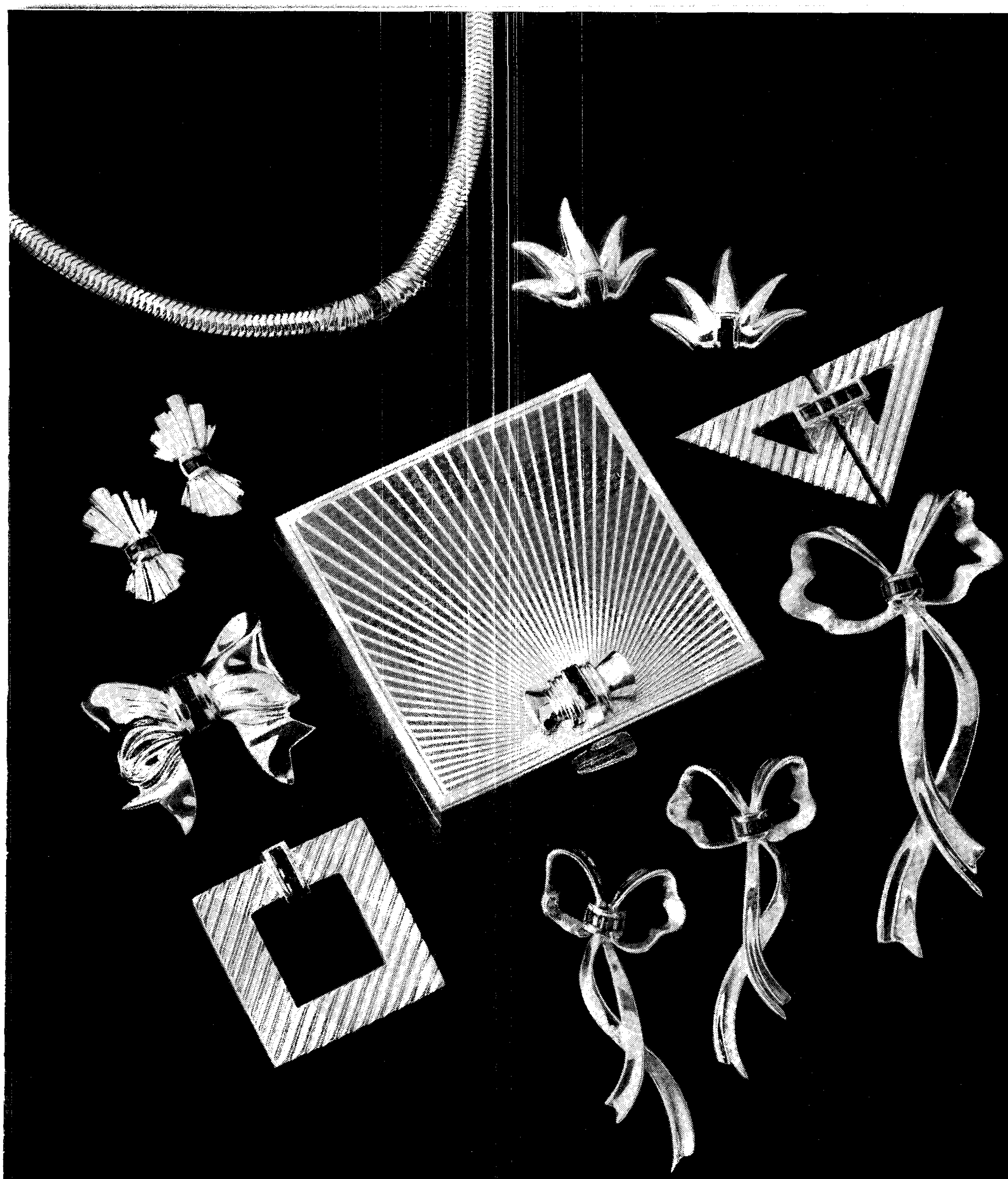
One afternoon a few days later, I was talking about Slonimsky with Ana Daniel, a young writer and photographer who served as one of his secretaries for a seven-year stretch during the seventies, and at one point she commented, "When he realized that he wasn't a genius, he realized he wasn't the center of the world, and that led to a certain mock despair—in fact, a tremendous amount of mock despair—but I think it also came as a relief."

SLONIMSKY returned to Russia in the spring of 1914 and resumed his studies at St. Petersburg University, where he was concentrating on physics, astronomy, and mathematics, having abandoned hope of a pianistic career, although he was continuing to take private lessons in composition with Vasily Kalafati, who had been Stravinsky's first teacher. Within months, the First World War began.

In early 1916, Slonimsky was drafted. "When the Czar had to recruit a soldier the likes of me," he said one evening, as our conversation turned to this phase of his life, "it was a plain indication—plain to me, anyway—that he was in serious trouble." Slonimsky was assigned to the music section of the Preobrazhensky regiment, which had been founded as Peter the Great's own. In the summer of 1916, the Preobrazhensky orchestra was sent to the placid delta of the Don River, where Slonimsky helped safeguard the empire's southern flank by, among other things, serving as soloist in the orchestra's rendition of the first movement of Rachmaninoff's Second Piano Concerto. He and the regiment were called back to Petrograd—as St. Petersburg had been recast, to rid the capital's name of its Germanic connotations—toward the end of 1916, just in time to appear as featured players in the initial Russian Revolution in February the following year. To hear Slonimsky tell it, less than world-historical forces were at work. "Actually, all the trouble started because of a crazy rule about the electric trams," he insists. "Soldiers, because of their service in the war, were being allowed to ride free, but because of the way they tended to hog all the available space, preventing civilians from even getting on the trams, the number of soldiers permitted on board a tram was limited to six at a time. If a seventh soldier boarded, all seven were subject to immediate arrest, notwithstanding the manifest innocence of the first six. This led to increasing clashes between soldiers and military police, and one day in February some regular Army troops were called in to back up the military police, but they refused to act against their buddies. So then, in an effort to staunch the deteriorating situation, the most loyal imperial regiment, my own Preobrazhensky, was called in to quell the mutiny—only, we refused, too. And within hours came word that the Czar had abdicated. We'd had no idea! All over a silly, unenforceable regulation."

Slonimsky was swept up in the revolutionary fervor. In his autobiography, he quotes a passage from the diary of a bohemian contemporary: "Nicolas Slonimsky, a student, came to see us, full of the joy of the revolution. He even forgot all about his egocentrism." Things in Russia radicalized fairly quickly during 1917, and the parliamentary revolution that had brought the moderate Alexander Kerensky to the fore was soon superseded by the October Revolution of the Bolsheviks. "That second revolution actually took place during a night and early morning when I happened to be on a train returning from Moscow to Petrograd," Slonimsky recalls. "And the first indication I had that anything had happened was that the town of Petrograd seemed unusually quiet as I disembarked from the train. A few minutes later, on the tram, I was reading a newspaper which a few weeks earlier would have been thought quite radical but had overnight been transmogrified into a forum for reaction. A sailor seated next to me demanded, 'How can you read a rag like that, which supports that Jew Kerensky? Me, I endorse that true Russian Trotsky!' Of course, Trotsky was the Jew—he was born Bronstein—and Kerensky was a pure Russian from the Volga region, but I decided that this might not be the appropriate moment to debunk this particular young man's misconceptions. He was carrying a bayonet."

Although Slonimsky was basically sympathetic to the initial goals of the Revolution, he was, like his father—perhaps like most members of the St. Petersburg intelligentsia—at best only vaguely political. He witnessed some remarkable things—he was present, for example, at the rally where Trotsky actually called for the formation of the Red Army and began taking volunteers—but he barely recognized their political import. Or, at least, in



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his autobiography and in his conversational recollections, he seldom frames matters in political terms. (He and John Reed, for example, seem to have inhabited two different revolutions.) Rather—but perhaps this is what it is actually like to have lived through such seminal events—Slonimsky's recollections quickly descend into a chaotic, almost anarchic swirl of shortages, pestilence, mobilizations, sieges, marauding armies, insuperable bureaucratic complications, and devastating famines. Slonimsky stayed on in Petrograd through the winter and spring of 1918. (Indeed, he was engaged for a brief period as piano teacher to the children of the Grand Duke Michael, the brother of the deposed czar—a job for which he was regularly picked up in a splendid troika.) But in the summer and early fall of 1918 the situation in Petrograd deteriorated dramatically: with famine spreading, Slonimsky recalls, the city of his birth was turning into "a city of death." Hunger hallucinations were becoming commonplace, along with things that ought to have been hallucinations but weren't: one afternoon, gazing down a street, Slonimsky saw people pouring out of their houses, carving knives held at the ready in every upraised right arm, converging on an overworked horse that had just collapsed in the street. In mid-autumn of 1918, Slonimsky resolved to leave Petrograd.

Having been granted a three-month passport to organize concerts in the Ukraine, Slonimsky set out for Kiev. It was the beginning of a harrowing journey: the civil war was by then in full fever, and the landscape was overrun with shifting armies. "The terrible thing," Slonimsky recalls, "was that you never had any idea who was manning each new barricade, so you never had any idea which password to use, which documents to show, which loyalty to claim. And things weren't much better once you got to Kiev, because the city, too, seemed to be overrun by some new army every second week. In fact, between 1918 and 1920 Kiev changed hands seventeen times! So you went to bed in a city flying the white flag, or the green, and woke up in one flying the red, or that of some Ukrainian nationalist army or some other free-lance outfit. One morning, we woke up and the town had been overrun by *Martians*—or people who might as well have been Martians for all we understood of their language, which certainly wasn't Russian or any Ukrainian dialect. These guys turned out to be elements of the Polish Army who'd simply boarded an empty train and ridden it a couple hundred miles east, since nobody seemed to be around on that particular day to stop them. But they had no particular reason to be there, either, and I guess they got bored, because a few days later they were gone, having taken the same train back."

During his time in Kiev, Slonimsky resided in the city's only skyscraper—a six-story building, owned by an industrialist friend of his family's, that was also serving as refuge for a remarkable collection of cultural figures, including the widow and children of the composer Scriabin, and the great religious philosopher Lev Shestov and his family. By late 1919, however, Slonimsky had launched out once again, heading south on a journey that proved even more harrowing. Eventually, he made it to the Crimea, to Chekhov's Yalta, which was in its final days of White Army rule. There, among other things, he saw the famous beach promenade transformed into an improvised gallows, with the bodies of young men and women strung up from telegraph poles and swinging in the breeze, signs reading "RED" draped across their breasts.

At length, he managed to book passage aboard a small boat flying the Turkish flag and bound for British-occupied Constantinople, where he debarked, famished and virtually penniless, in late March, 1920. As luck would have it, musicians were in great demand in the bars and restaurants and theatres and silent-movie houses of the Turkish capital. There, during the next year, and then briefly in Bulgaria as well, Slonimsky gradually recouped both his physical and his financial health; and, finally, in April of 1921, he set out for Paris, the great magnet for Russian émigrés.

The evening Slonimsky described this terrifying period of his life for me, I asked him whether he had ever got nostalgic for life before the Revolution, for the life he might have led if it had never happened.

"On the contrary," he said vehemently. "I was *saved* by the Revolution. Without the Revolution, I would have become obsessed with my vanity. I would have reverted to brooding over my supposed genius, I would have become subsumed into the pointless life of the St. Petersburg intelligentsia. The Revolution—and especially the civil war that followed it—reduced everything to its lowest common denominator: survival. It forced me, among other things, to go out and earn a living—me, from my family, in which any commercial undertaking had always been deemed a disgrace. It forced me out into the world."

Still, I asked him, hadn't all the horrors he'd experienced and witnessed somehow scarred him?

"History never drives anyone mad," Slonimsky replied. "History made *me* sane. I was unbalanced. These sorts of upheavals quickly deprive you of vanity, of egotism, of self-centeredness, *because nobody's interested*. If you simply have to save your physical self, your mental and psychological disturbances tend to vanish."

As it turned out, Slonimsky stayed in Paris less than two years, but they were eventful years. He was quickly caught up in the vigorous Franco-Russian cultural scene, with its concerts and recitals and parties. In his autobiographical manuscript, he reports one of his "most striking memories" of a party from that period:

> Among those present was a very tall, middle-aged woman with a rather small head which looked like an extension of a long slender neck, continued in an elongated torso, with the whole upper body reposing rather incongruously on a disproportionately large pelvis and fat legs. I asked the hostess who the woman was. "Why, she is Mademoiselle Eiffel" was the reply, "the daughter of the builder of the Eiffel Tower."

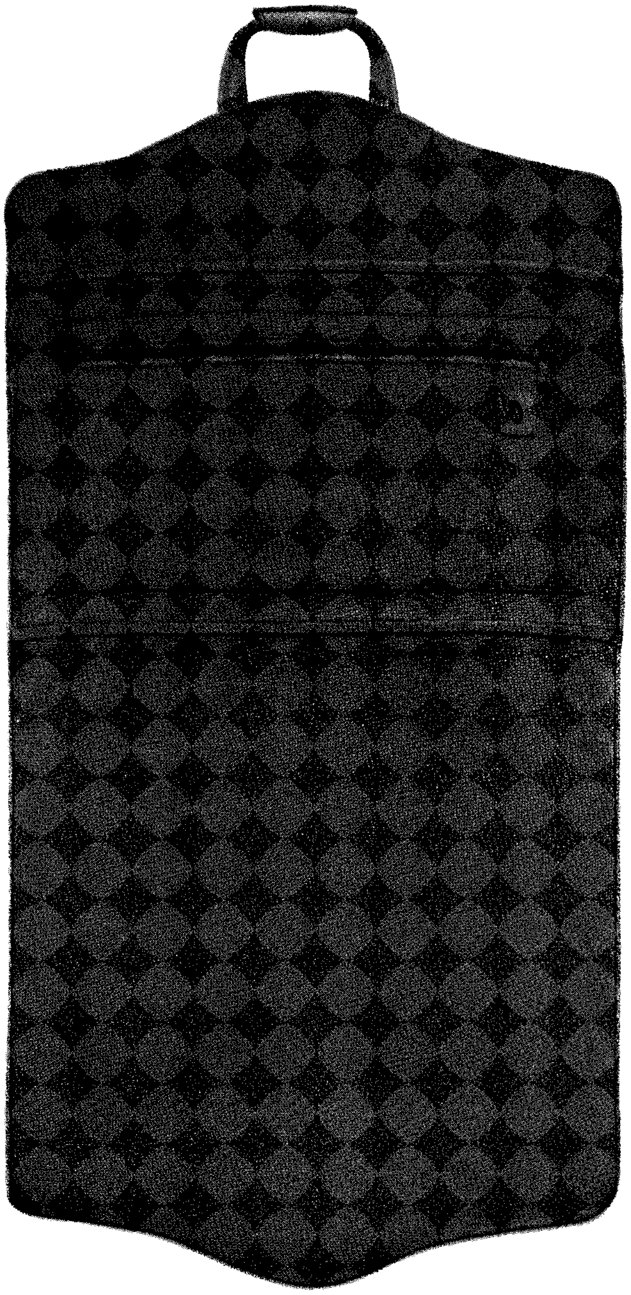
During this period, Slonimsky procured a great deal of work as piano accompanist for opera singers giving solo recitals—he could sight-read virtually anything. Occasionally, these concerts produced their share of problems: critics would praise the accompanist more than the featured soloist. But he continued to be in considerable

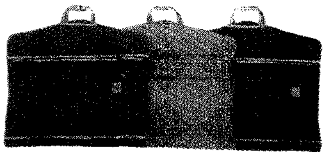
d. ehrenberg

demand. He also served a stint as a pianist with the Diaghilev ballet company.

His most important breakthrough in Paris, however, came when he was approached by Serge Koussevitzky, who asked whether he'd be willing to try out for a position as a rehearsal pianist. "I'd never heard of such a thing," Slonimsky explained, "but it appeared that Koussevitzky—who was independently wealthy by way of his wife and could therefore afford to do so—preferred to rehearse for his full-orchestra rehearsals by going over the score alone with a pianist. I'd play a piano arrangement of the orchestra score, and he'd be off to the side, keeping the beat and delivering elaborate cues to the phantom orchestra which—in his mind, anyway—he'd managed to crowd into the room with us. We'd rehearse thus over and over, until he felt ready to face the actual full orchestra."

Koussevitzky invited Slonimsky to join him for the summer of 1922 in Biarritz and help him prepare for an autumn performance of Stravinsky's "Le Sacre du Printemps." "This proved my first experience at tackling a truly modern work," Slonimsky recalled. "The discords, the rhythmic fluctuations were all incredibly exciting to me. But, to my dismay, I began to realize that they were beyond Koussevitzky's grasp: in particular, he seemed unable to cope with the sudden metrical changes. For instance, where the score went from 3/16 to 2/8, he kept slowing down the sixteenth notes or else accelerating the eighths, dissolving everything into formless, neutral triplets. Or, at the very beginning of the most difficult section, the 'Danse Sacrale,' there's a sixteenth-note rest followed by a full orchestra chord on an eighth note. Conductors often have trouble with this. Stravinsky himself, when he conducted 'Le Sacre,' usually solved the problem by burping on the tacit downbeat. But Koussevitzky just couldn't get it. Then, one day, I noticed that the situation could be remedied, after a fashion, by rebarring the piece so that, for instance, a succession of bars of 3/16, 2/8, 1/16, and 4/8 could be integrated into a single bar of 4/4. This created certain problems with regard to the downbeat, but they could be compensated for. I sketched out some of these possible revisions for Koussevitzky, but he'd have none of it. 'We can't change Stravinsky's rhythms,' he insisted. Several weeks later, however, back in Paris, rehears-





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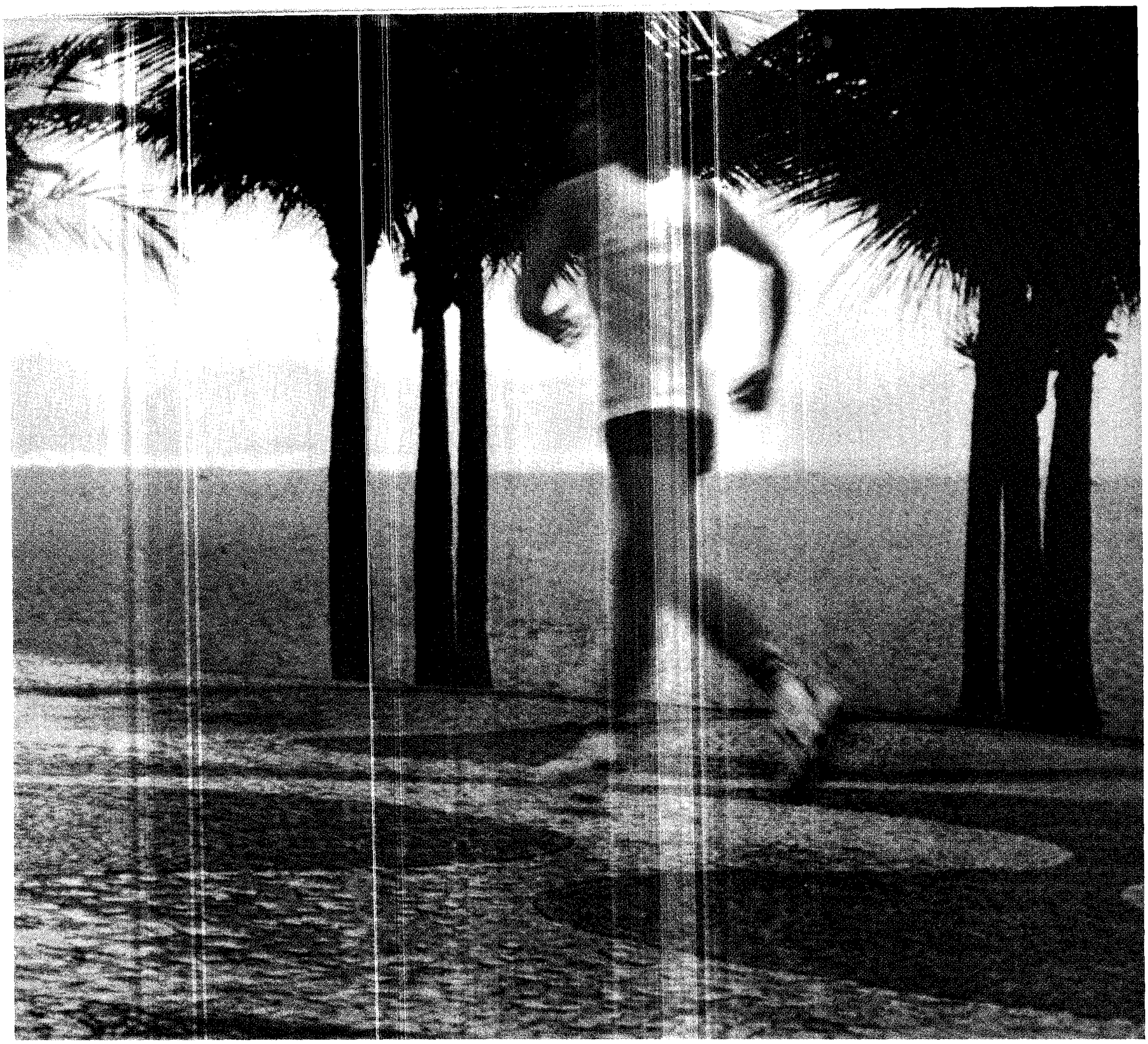

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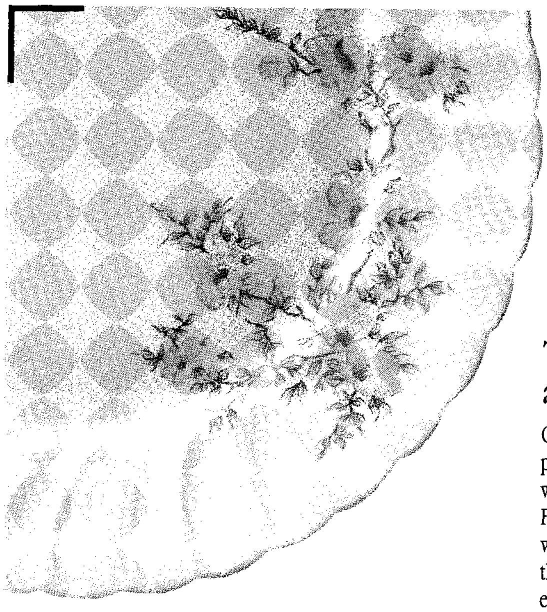
als with the full orchestra were going badly, and at one point he came up to me and said, 'Show me that arrangement you made.' I eagerly explained the idea to him, pointing out examples in the score, but his eyes quickly glazed over. 'I don't understand a thing you say,' he declared. 'Just go over there and put in your bar lines in blue pencil.' Which I did, and the solution worked. Every performance thereafter, in Paris and subsequently in Boston, Koussevitzky worked from scores rebarred according to my arrangement.

"The story has a coda," Slonimsky now said, getting up for a moment, heading down the hall, and returning with a large scrapbook. "Back in April, 1984, on the occasion of my ninetieth birthday, there was a party, and various people sent notes, and—Let's see, where is it? Ah, yes, this one here." He handed me a sheet of elegant, heavy beige paper, on which was inscribed the following handwritten message: "Dear Nicolas: Everytime I conduct *Le Sacre*, as I did most recently two weeks ago (and always from Koussy's own score, with your rebarring), I admire and revere and honor you as I did the very first time. Bless you, and more power to you. —Lenny B."

In addition to serving as Koussevitzky's surrogate orchestra, Slonimsky increasingly took on responsibilities as his secretary. Between brief touring forays as an accompanist, he'd return to Paris and help order the Maestro's affairs. For example, he handled the negotiations when Koussevitzky commissioned Ravel to produce a full-orchestra version of Mussorgsky's "Pictures at an Exhibition." And things would have no doubt continued along such lines had not Slonimsky, one day early in the fall of 1923, received a telegram from America.

VLADIMIR ROSING, one of the countless musicians with whom Slonimsky had toured Europe as an accompanist, was a somewhat eccentric, ostentatiously mannerist Russian tenor (and, incidentally, a great favorite of Ezra Pound's). Some months after their tour together, Rosing happened to be crossing the Atlantic aboard a luxury liner on which George Eastman, the millionaire inventor of the Kodak camera and lavish cultural philanthropist, was a passenger. After being introduced to Eastman, Rosing suggested, on the spur of



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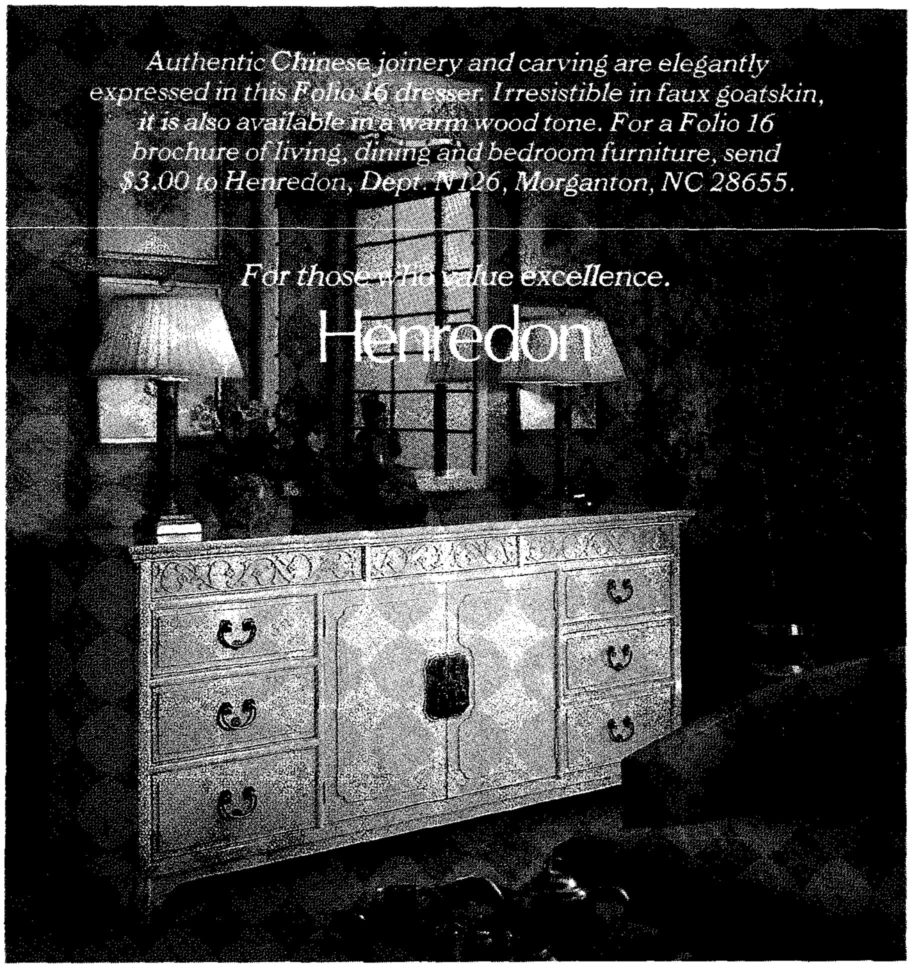

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the moment, that perhaps he ought to include an opera subdivision in the Eastman School of Music, which he'd recently founded in Rochester, New York; and, on the spur of the moment, Eastman agreed, appointing Rosing to head it. As a consequence, one morning in October, 1923, Slonimsky found himself getting off a train in Rochester, to which he'd been summoned to take up the position of coach and rehearsal pianist with Rosing's newly formed American Opera Company. He was almost thirty years old, and he spoke almost no English.

"Well, actually, that first week, he was capable of three phrases," Paul Horgan recently recalled. " 'Yes,' 'thank you,' and 'please.' " Horgan himself later attained considerable fame as a novelist and man of letters, but in 1923 he was working as a scenic designer with Rosing's opera company, collecting the experiences he would presently distill and transform into his first novel, "The Fault of Angels"—in which he included, among other characters, a charmingly bemused Russian émigré opera coach named Colya Savinsky (Colya being the Russian diminutive for Nicolas). Horgan is now professor emeritus at Wesleyan University, where I'd tracked him down and found him filled with fond memories of those years. "When Colya first arrived, he was pale, small, trim, with black eyes and a fascinating intelligence, always in perfect control while always affecting a mild bewilderment," Horgan told me. "He dressed in black at all times, like a clerk. But, as I say, that first week he had only these three phrases, by which he was somehow able to convey to me his wish that I should help him learn English. I gave him a copy of 'The Pickwick Papers' and instructed him just to start reading it and under no circumstances to have recourse to a dictionary. And that is what he did: he read it avidly while rehearsing the opera company, and in a couple of weeks he was speaking fine Dickensian English."

I asked Horgan what he meant when he said that Slonimsky read *while* rehearsing the company.

"Just that," Horgan replied. "Colya would sit there at the piano playing out a piano score flawlessly, from memory, with impudent efficiency. He'd even memorized all the cues, so that he'd be interacting with the stage directors and the singers. And as he played he'd be reading 'The Pickwick Papers,' which he had perched on the piano easel before him, and he'd be turning the pages in the middle of his playing, entirely absorbed."

"Yes," Slonimsky said some time later when I mentioned Horgan's recollection to him. "I'd memorized the piano score for virtually every opera in the standard repertoire back in my conservatory days, as a hobby. And my work as an accompanist in Paris had, of course, refreshed my memory. So I'd use the time to read. I read Anatole France's 'Les Dieux Ont Soif,' I remember, during the rehearsals for 'Carmen.' But I was mainly reading English. I was having a terrible time with phonetic pronunciation. O-u-g-h, for example, bothered me frightfully. You know—'through,' 'though,' 'bough,' that sort of thing. Or vowels—I couldn't *hear* the difference, let alone reproduce it. And the t-h diphthong. On the boat over, a book I consulted had suggested that one achieved the t-h sound by sticking one's tongue between one's teeth. What kind of crazy language was this, I remember wondering, that forced you to stick your tongue out every time you used the definite article? And, of

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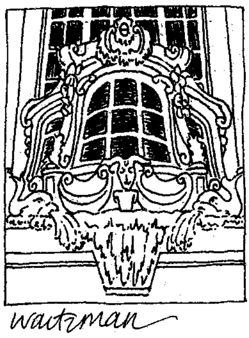
course, the idioms were impossible. Friends would ask me how my day had gone, and when I'd say 'I worked hardly' they'd all crack up. It wasn't until the company was doing 'H.M.S. Pinafore'—remember that passage 'I never use the big, big D. What, never? . . . Well, hardly ever'—that I suddenly saw the light on 'hardly.' Actually, I learned a great deal of my English from Gilbert and Sullivan, although, as you can imagine, this produced some strange results in the coffee shop."



"The fact is we all became so charmed with Nicolai's mispronunciations that we took them up ourselves, and this certainly didn't make things any easier for him," another of Slonimsky's friends of the period, the harpist Lucile Johnson Rosenbloom, told me. "For instance, he would tell people about his Awunt Isabelle, and they'd correct him, and he'd say no, 'awunt' must be right, because that was how Paul and Lucile both pronounced it." Nicolas had suggested that I phone Mrs. Rosenbloom, recalling that he and Horgan and their colleague Rouben Mamoulian (he had been recruited by Rosing as a stage director for the company but soon moved on to greater fame in Hollywood) had formed a fan club around the beautiful harpist in the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra—"the Venus de Milo with arms," they'd called her. "It was a wonderful time," she told me. "Nicolai had somehow managed to rent an apartment in a little white wooden house, which he left perpetually unlocked, and our group would repair there almost every night, late, following all our various engagements. George Eastman was sparing nothing in those days, and he'd gathered an extraordinary group of people together there in Rochester: the conductors Albert Coates and Eugene Goossens, and, later, the composer Otto Luening. So we'd all collect at Nicolai's and discuss how very stupid everybody in the world was except us—we were being playful, it was never malicious. And the thing was that Nicolai had discovered a novelty store, so that in Nicolai's house if you reached for a candy it was invariably made of soap; if you reached for a glass of water it turned out to be a dribble glass and you got soaked; if you tried to light a cigarette the match would explode, sending colorful sparks in all directions. He had the whole place booby-trapped with his enthusiasms. That was Nicolai's discovery of America, and we were all getting to experience it through him. That, and his discovery of English. For he seemed to be constantly memorizing new words—lists of them at a time, the longer and more abstruse the better—and then working them into his conversation as quickly as possible. 'Parcevendageous'—I can still remember that—I think was his own invention, meaning second- or third-rate. Or 'accubate,' which was to eat while lying down. Or 'pediculous,' from the Latin word for louse, as he'd inform us, meaning lousy. He and Paul and Rouben had formed this Society of Unrecognized Geniuses, but they had to disband it a few years later, because they'd all become too famous."

I asked Mrs. Rosenbloom whether Nicolas dwelt at all on the horrendous events associated with his flight from Russia, which, after all, had occurred just three or four years earlier.

"Not at all," she replied. "Not once, ever. He didn't seem the least bit traumatized. Or, rather, he seemed entirely caught up in the intensity and vitality and energy of this new land." Mrs. Rosenbloom paused for a moment, then sighed. "Oh," she said. "I do thank you for calling. I've got into a wonderful mood just thinking about all this."

I had asked Horgan a similar question about Slonimsky's sense of his dark past, and he had agreed. "He displayed no sense whatever of the tragedy of the history which had preceded his arrival," he replied. "No, our connections were all larkish and prankish. It was a bohemian world of great conviviality. Colya would sit there in his house at his piano and entertain us for hours with his wonderful diversions. 'Le Petit Cochon Qui Se Dégonfle,' I remember, was one piano piece he'd written which was much called for at parties. And then, of course, there were the Advertising Songs."

"ANOTHER one of my fascinations in those early days," Slonimsky recalled for me one afternoon, getting up from his table and moving over to the piano, "was the *Saturday Evening Post*, and particularly the unique poetry of its gaudy advertisements. I couldn't get over their language: cynicism set in only much later, I suppose—these early offerings were utterly unabashed. There was one, for example, in which a bearded Germanic doctor was pointing his finger at a beautiful, forlorn female sufferer"—Nicolas now suddenly struck the keyboard, producing a deep, ominous descending underflourish. "And the banner headline above the picture read"—now Nicolas launched into song, unleashing his "unbeautiful tenor voice," (as he sometimes calls it)—"AND THEN . . . THE DOCTOR TOLD HER . . ." Nicolas then crooned a whole series of advertising songs, one after another, his fingers dancing across the keyboard, his head arched toward the ceiling in the manner of a coyote in rapture. "Mother," he urged plaintively at the climax of a song based on a truly bizarre ad for Castoria, "relieve your . . . child!" A few minutes later, he was imploring, "No more shiny nose," in a rendition of an ad for Vauv nose powder ("Something to keep your nose from getting shiny, something to relieve you of this oiliness of skin"), which seemed to derive its melodic inspiration from a chorus of Volga boatmen. On a more sprightly note, moments later, he was inviting me to "make this a day for Plurodent" ("It brings to you new beauty, new emotion; it means to you new safety, new delight. . . . Film on your teeth ferments and forms an acid, this vicious film that clings to teeth").

"Plurodent?" I asked when he'd concluded.

"Yes," he said, thoroughly invigorated. "Of course, it was Pepsodent, but, strangely, the Pepsodent people refused to grant me permission to use their name; I tried to sell my song to them, but instead they threatened to sue me. So a few years later, when I got set to publish the songs, Pepsodent became Plurodent. The nose-powder company had in the meantime gone out of business, so no problem. Strangest of all, the Castoria people gave me unqualified permission to use their name."

Slonimsky quickly dashed off another song, this one for Utica sheets and pillowcases ("So soft, so smooth, so snowy white"). "You see, this idea of advertising jingles was one of my inventions—only, like my grandfather, I was too impractical to think of patenting it. This was 1924, just before the popularization of the radio,

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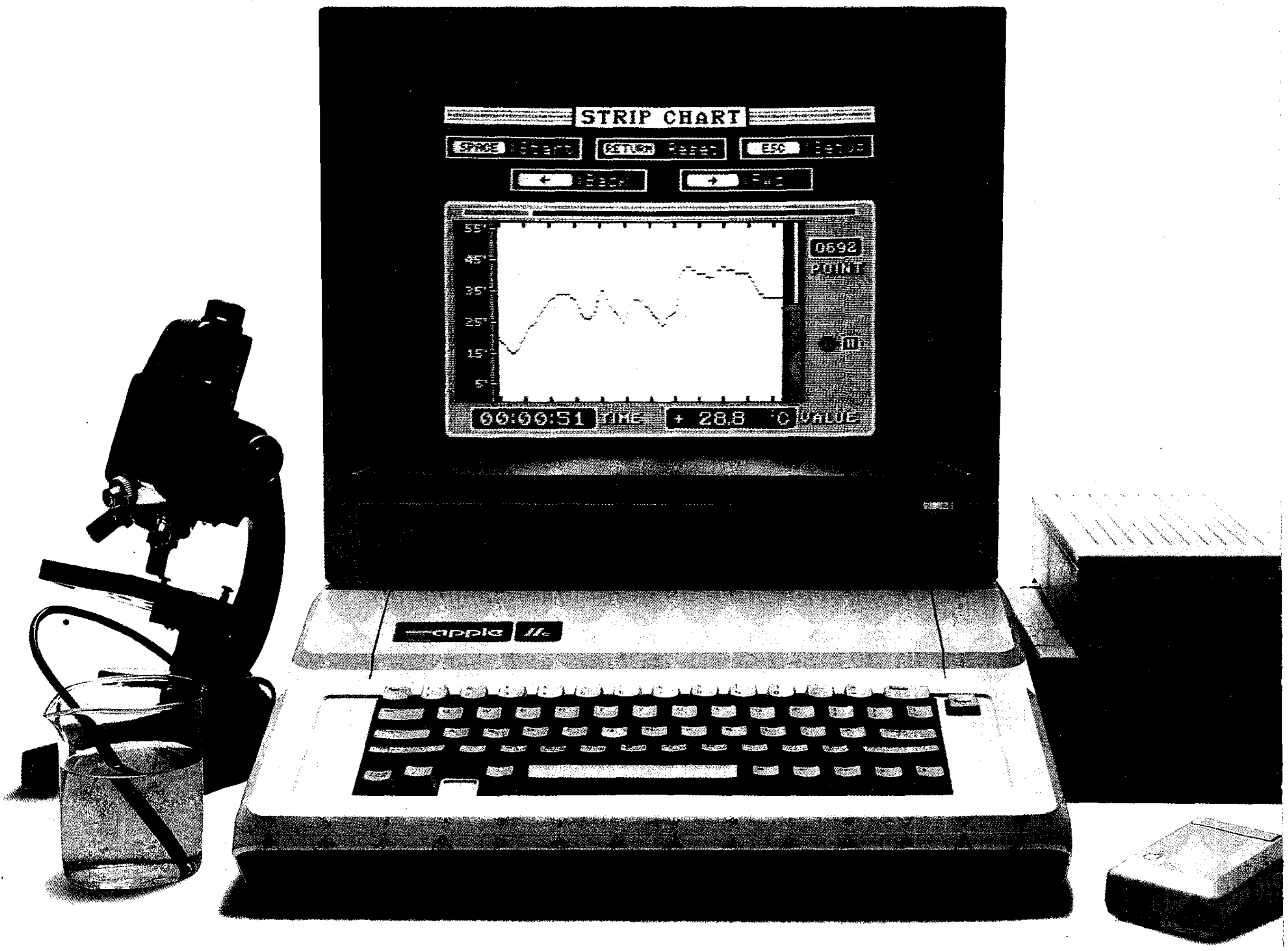

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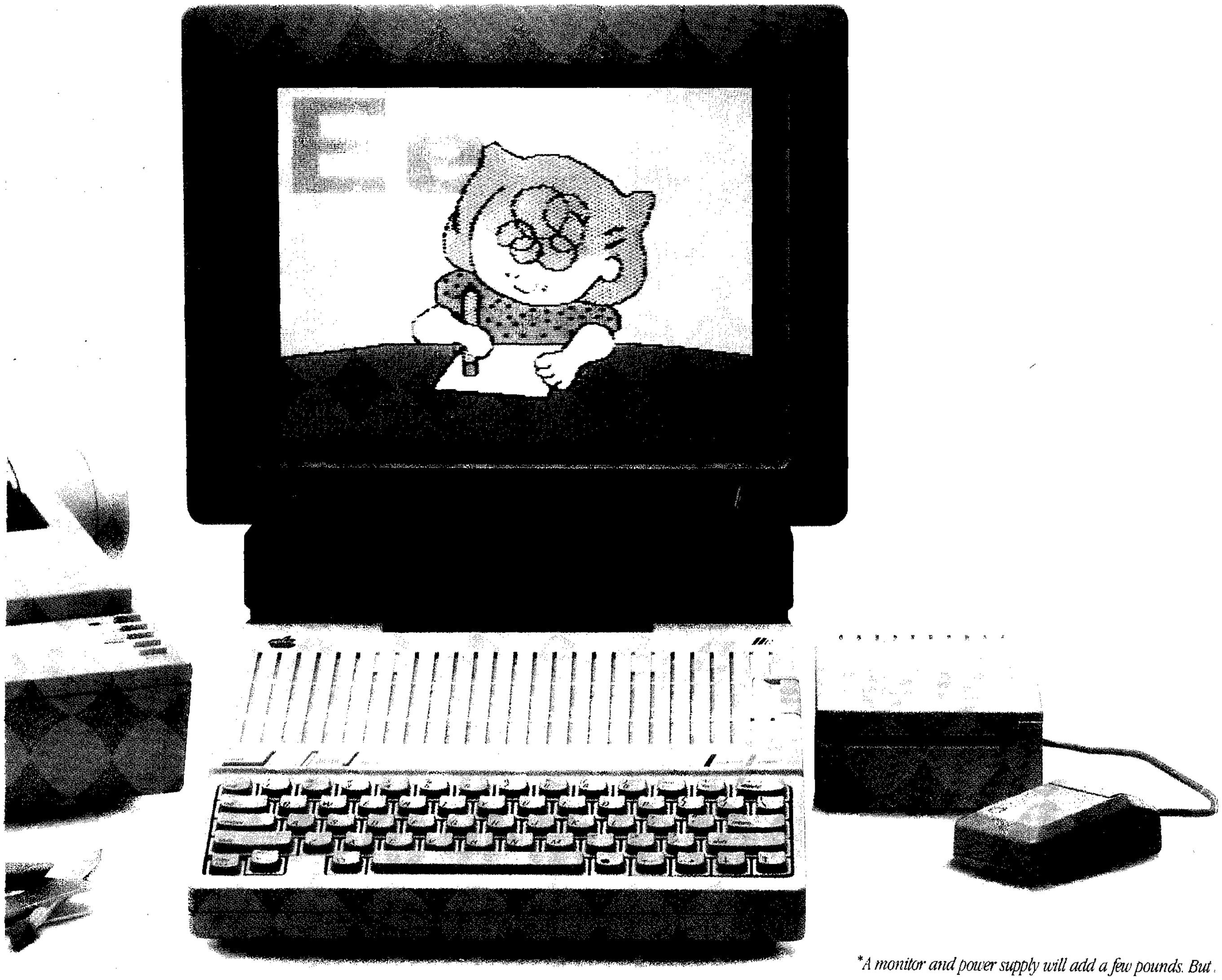

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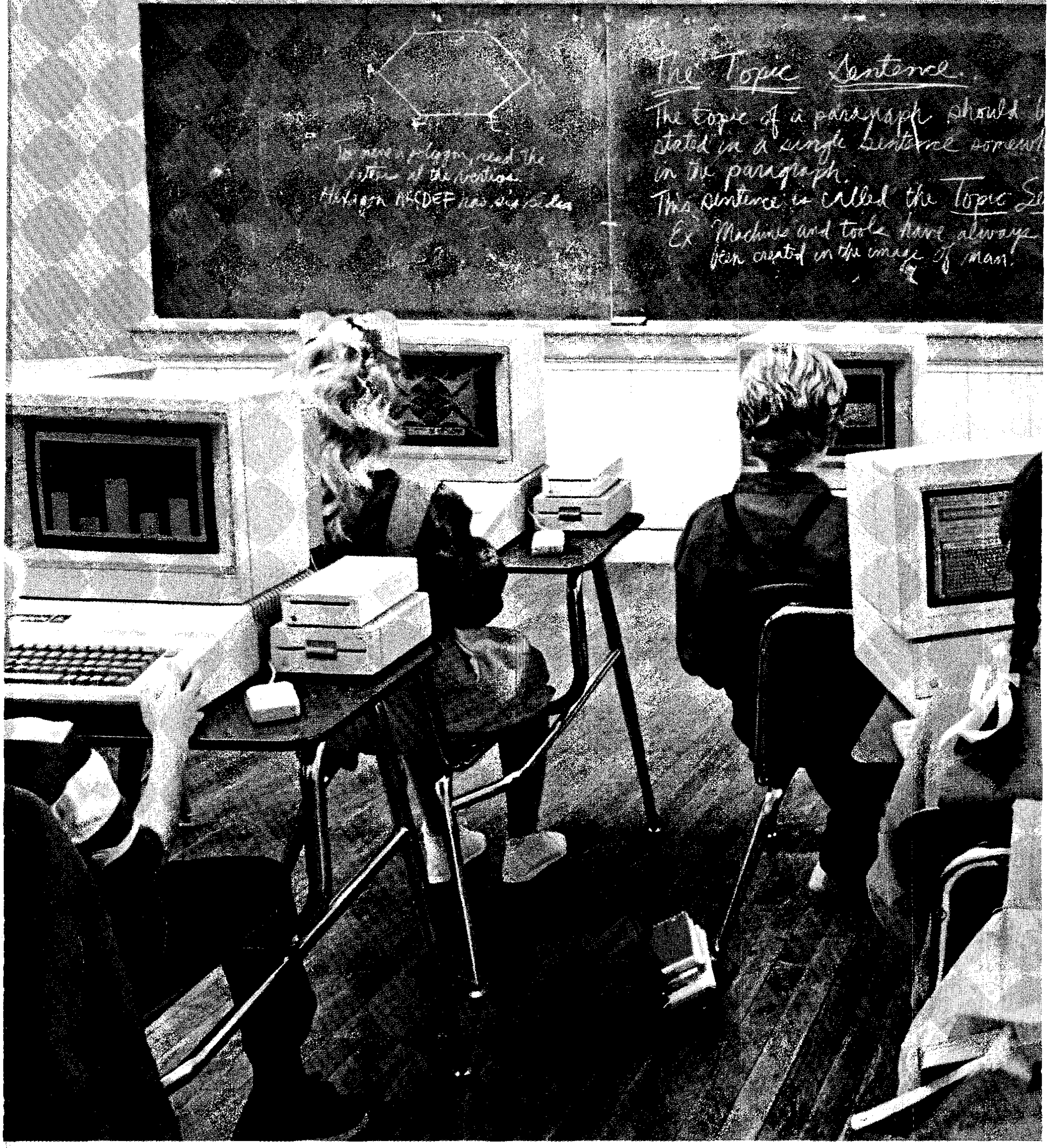
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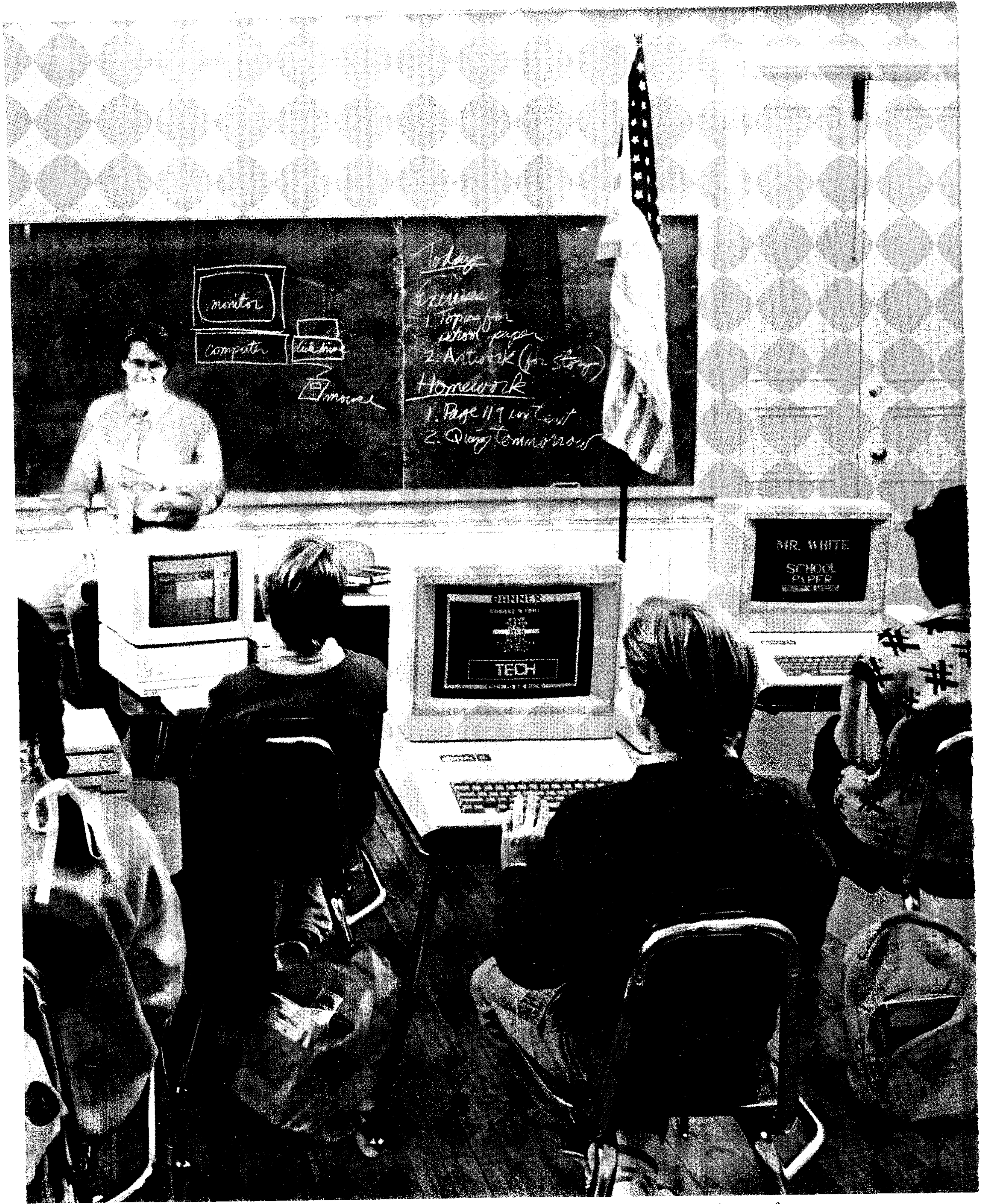
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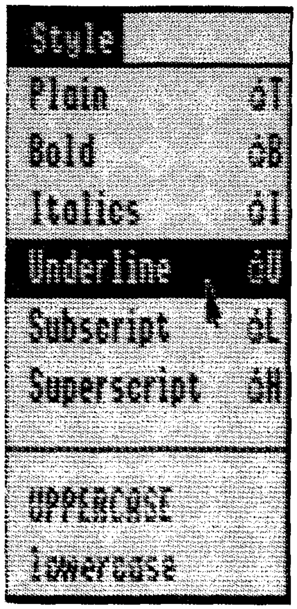
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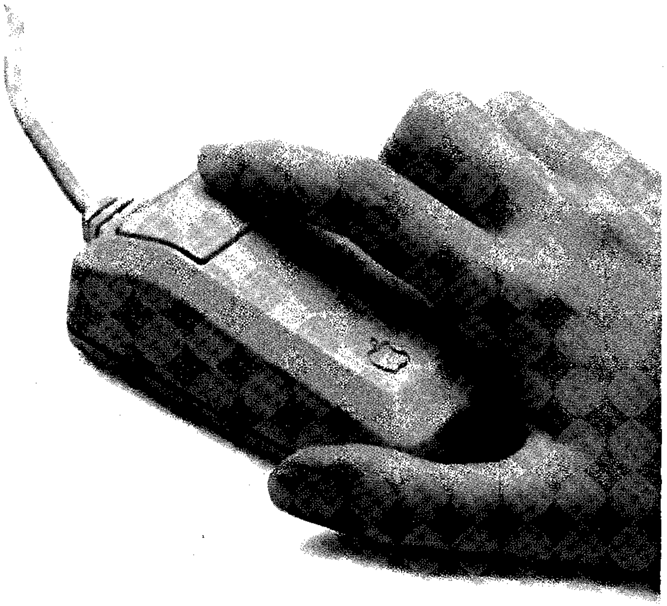

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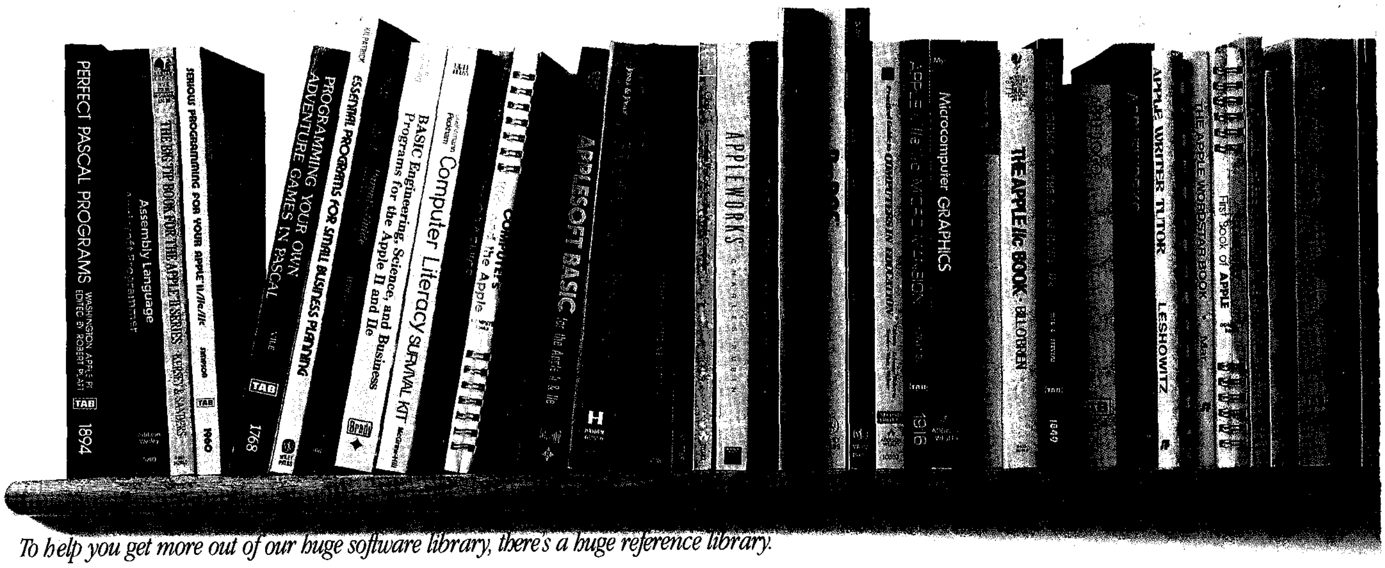
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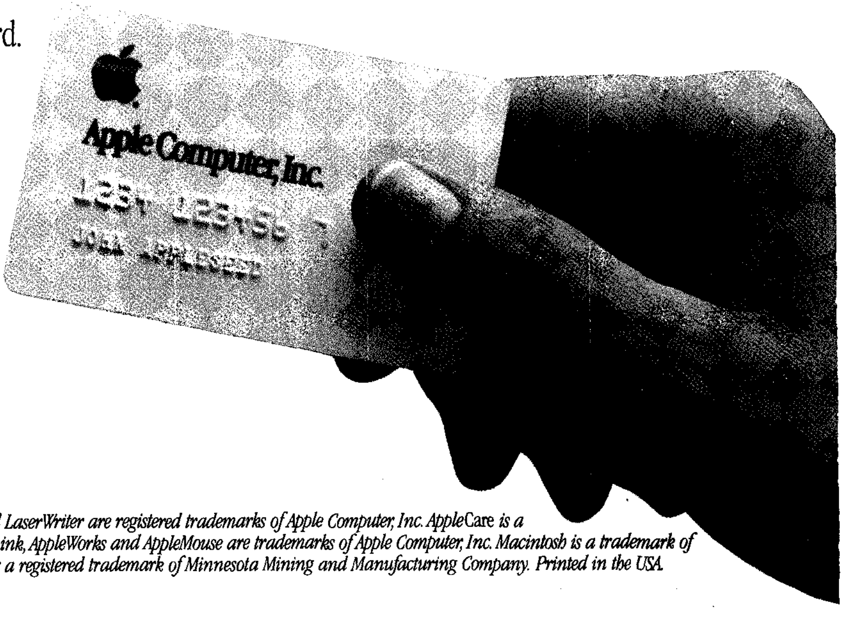

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and nobody had yet thought of this notion of putting advertising to music, so it was a big innovation. The thing is that although the language of the words of these songs was new to me, the musical language was pure St. Petersburg Conservatory. That Castoria song could be ascribed to Mussorgsky—harmonically, melodically, contrapuntally. It would have received a perfect score from Glazunov.

"But I was changing. Maybe it was related to the fact that during those years I was having to move through so many new *spoken* languages, especially English. In any case, I began developing a longing to expand the boundaries of my *musical* language as well. So that just four years after this"—he repeated the "Children Cry for Castoria" theme—"I was composing this." Slonimsky proceeded to play an eerily modern-sounding piece, made all the more eerie by the way his hands moved across the keyboard, his left hand confining itself to black keys, his right to white ones. "You see," he explained, looking over at me as his hands continued playing, as if on automatic pilot (actually, as if on two *separate* automatic pilots), "the nineteen-twenties in music constituted an orgy of dissonance. To have merely joined in that orgy would not have satisfied my vanity. So instead I created this sequence, which I called 'Studies in Black and White,' in mutually exclusive consonant counterpoint—or, to be accurate, in 'consonant counterpoint in mutually exclusive diatonic and pentatonic systems,' as I phrased it at the time, for I was already addicted to polysyllabic self-expression." He slowed his playing down to half time, quarter time. "You see, it's a case of trompe-l'oreille: although it's in fact entirely made up of consonances, it sounds dissonant, because it's made up of the kind of so-called false relations which were forbidden back at the Conservatory. Just as I loved puns in English, I loved them in music, too."

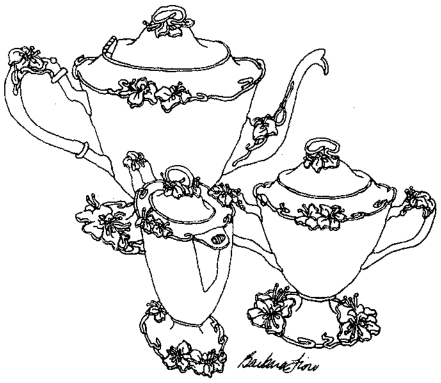
Over the years, Nicolas continued to compose—once in a while for full orchestra but more often for piano alone, or else for singer accompanied by piano. In 1928, the year of his "Studies in Black and White," he wrote the song "I Owe a Debt to a Monkey," inspired by the Scopes trial; in 1945, he composed a vocal suite based on epitaphs he'd found on the tombstones in an old New England cemetery, entitled "The Gravestones of Hancock, New Hampshire." ("Stop, my friends, as you pass by. As you are now, so once was I. As I am now, so you will be. Prepare for death and follow me.") Most of the piano pieces are miniatures, composed from a somewhat cockeyed vantage point. In 1979, Schirmer's published Slonimsky's compilation of "51 Minitudes," a thin volume—just forty-two pages—that happened to be sitting on the piano easel that afternoon. Slonimsky opened the book and offered to display a few of them, beginning with the first, entitled "$\sqrt{B^5}$," or, as Slonimsky now demonstrated delightedly, the square root of Beethoven's Fifth, for what he'd done with this piece was simply to compress all the intervals between the famous notes of the clichéd opening of the Beethoven symphony, as it were, by their square roots. Ba-ba-ba-*bum* thus becomes Ba-ba-ba-*bee*, and so forth. "After a while," he suggested, "you might get to like this version better—it's more salty, more acrid. But what's fascinating is that it's still recognizably Beethoven." Some of the other Minitudes parody a variety of musical styles; for example, there's "Casanova in Casa Nueva, Hollywood, California," which Slonimsky describes as "a deliberately gooey tonal mucilage, imitative of movie music," and which includes such markings as "orgiastico" and concludes with a repeat sign marked "D.C. al orgasmo." Slonimsky played me several more examples, concluding with his "Fragment from an Unwritten Piano Concerto."

It was pretty impressive. I asked him why he hadn't written the full concerto—why, in fact, he hadn't taken his composing more seriously.

"What for?" he countered. "What am I going to do, eat the reviews?"

Didn't he have music welling up inside him, crying out for expression?

"No," he replied. "I don't believe in that sort of thing. Sometimes, admittedly, it can get bothersome—I'm composing away in my head. If I let myself go, it would get to be like a vision, an aural vision—I have to watch it. But I feel no need to write out these symphonies. I know too many geniuses who composed masterpieces and became mental basket cases worrying about how they weren't being recognized. I don't have this problem."



ROSING's American Opera Company in Rochester lasted just a few years; then Eastman withdrew funding for the venture as precipitately as he had originally extended it. But in the meantime Serge Koussevitzky had been appointed principal conductor of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, and, learning of the sudden availability of his surrogate orchestra, he invited Slonimsky to Boston for a repeat engagement. Slonimsky accepted, moving there in 1925. Alongside his other, more official duties, and notwithstanding his minimal competence in spoken English, Slonimsky was soon delivering short introductory lectures on symphony concerts at the Boston Public Library. Paul Horgan, who was present at some of these, recalled for me one occasion when Slonimsky introduced a performance of the Dvořák Cello Concerto by praising the abilities of the evening's featured soloist, "that talented spaniel Pablo Casals."

In Boston, Slonimsky now met Dorothy Adlow, a recent Radcliffe graduate. "Seven years younger than me," he says, "and an eternity wiser." She was the daughter of Russian Jewish immigrants who had begun as push-cart peddlers and then prospered. (Her father ran a furniture store and spoke English with the Irish lilt of most of his customers.) She herself had studied art history in college and, shortly after graduation, had become an art critic for the *Christian Science Monitor*. In that capacity, she would prove to be the only consistent breadwinner in the Slonimsky household for most of the ensuing years. By the late twenties, she and Nicolas were inseparable companions.

By the end of 1927, meanwhile, Slonimsky was spending less time with Koussevitzky. He had launched a small ensemble of his own, the Chamber Orchestra of Boston, announcing that he would be devoting his programs principally to baroque and ultra-modern compositions, and that he himself would be the conductor. In Rochester, it seems, what little time Slonimsky had not spent studying English he had spent studying con-

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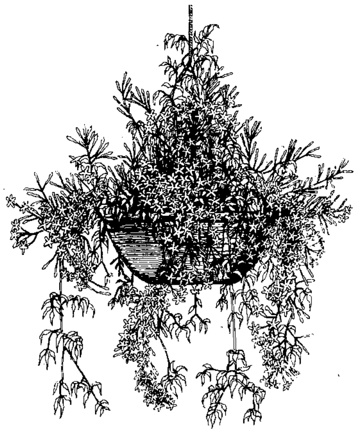

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ducting—specifically, the conducting of Albert Coates and Eugene Goossens. Coates, in fact, had taken him on as a student. "I was a particularly inept student," Slonimsky recalled one afternoon. "For one thing, I seemed unable to give a decisive initial downbeat. That can be a problem for a conductor—and a calamity for the orchestra." But over time he improved. He found the downbeat, and by 1928 he seemed capable of conducting the most complex modernist compositions—indeed, the more complex the better. In particular, he became captivated by the growing achievement of American avant-garde composers (he took to them the way he seemed to take to all things American)—this at a time when virtually no one else was paying any attention to them. For example, he became a close friend of Henry Cowell, the master of dissonant counterpoint and startling tone clusters. Cowell allowed Slonimsky to conduct the première of his Sinfonietta with the Chamber Orchestra, and then encouraged him to contribute a composition of his own to *New Music*, a quarterly, recently founded by Cowell, that would become the fount of American modernism. Slonimsky contributed his "Studies in Black and White," which ran in the Fall, 1928, issue, with some success. Cowell subsequently made Slonimsky an associate editor of the journal.

Slonimsky continued to identify himself with the fledgling American modernist movement and to champion its composers. The composers, in turn, championed him, for what that was worth. At one point, Cowell published an article in the magazine *Aesthete* titled "Four Little-Known Modern Composers: Carlos Chávez, Charles Ives, Nicolas Slonimsky, and Adolphe Weiss." The afternoon we were talking about this period, Slonimsky pulled a copy of the article out of his file and showed it to me. "Can you imagine?" he said. "Charles Ives, a 'little-known' composer. Extraordinary." Slonimsky went on to tell me about a day when Cowell took him along on a trip to New York to pay a call on Charles and Harmony Ives, at their brownstone, on East Seventy-fourth Street, where Ives, who was fifty-three, was still convalescing from a heart attack he'd suffered years earlier. Slonimsky described the chamber orchestra he'd recently founded and asked Ives if he would allow it to perform one of his works. Ives pulled out an old manuscript, which he had composed between 1903 and 1914 but which had never been performed, and asked whether something along its lines might do. This was the score of "Three Places in New England."

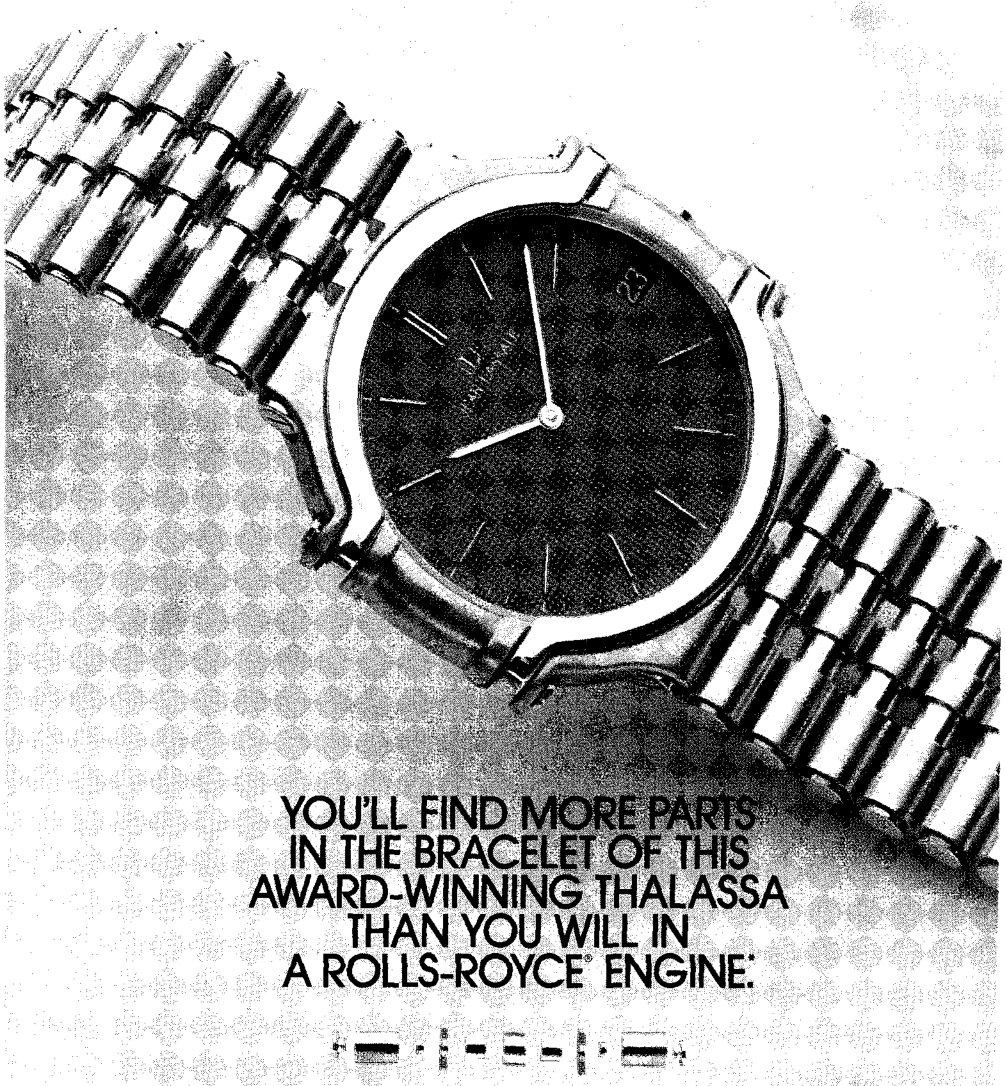
In his autobiography, Slonimsky has recorded his impression of that moment:

> As I looked over the score, I experienced a strange but unmistakable feeling that I was looking at a work of genius. I cannot tell precisely why this music produced such an impression on me. The score possessed elements that seemed to be mutually incompatible, and even incongruous: a freely flowing melody derived from American folk songs, set in harmonies that were dense and highly dissonant, but soon resolving into clearances of serene, cerulean beauty in triadic formations that created a spiritual catharsis. In contrast, there were rhythmic patterns of extreme complexity; some asymmetries in the score evoked in my mind by a strange association of ideas the elegant and yet irrational equations connecting the base of natural logarithms and the ratio of the circumference of a circle to its diameter with the so-called imaginary number, a square root of a negative quantity. The polytonalities and polyrhythms in the Ives score seemed incoherent when examined vertically, but simple and logical when viewed horizontally.

I often found myself wondering, during the weeks I spent chatting with Slonimsky and reading his writings, to what extent he *loved* music. At first, paradoxical as this may seem, I even wondered whether he loved music at all. But, of course, he does. The proper questions are: How does he love it? What does he love in it? For it seems to me he doesn't love music as most people do. Slonimsky seems to me a very sensual man, in his way, and a man of deep emotions beneath his playful surface, yet his appreciation of music is hardly sensual or emotional. He doesn't get carried away by its so-called spiritual quality. Sometimes he almost ridicules—at any rate, he certainly plays down—the sensual aspect of musical experience. He is not someone who is ravished by the *sound* of music, the sensual experience of that sound, its emotional or spiritual referents. "Waves rising and falling, that sort of thing," he said to me one day. "The waves on the Gulf of Finland just used to get me seasick. I don't see what value there would be in experiencing music in that way." Rather, his ear is so precise that he hears right through the sound to the structure, and it's the structure that quickens and vitalizes and transports him. I once discussed this with one of Slonimsky's best friends in California, the composer David Raksin. "It's true," Raksin said. "Nicolas doesn't appear to be ravished by music, he doesn't ecstasize. He's a cool guy—his flame burns a low blue." And that flame is intellect. Leibniz once wrote, in one of his famous letters to Goldbach, "Music is a hidden arithmetical activity of a mind that does not know it is counting." But Slonimsky *hears the counting.* For him, the love of music is a mathematical passion—it is calculation taking flight, a structural transport.

Several years later, in the mid-forties, long after the collapse of his conducting career, Slonimsky's mathemusical, structural passion achieved its apotheosis in an astonishing work he compiled, whose title is "Thesaurus of Scales and Melodic Patterns." The "Thesaurus" is a sort of musical index—a catalogue made up of rows of notes rather than words. Specifically, it is, Slonimsky explains, "an ordering of every possible succession of notes arranged by intervals as counted in semitones." In more than two thousand entries, Slonimsky has managed to generate every conceivable sequence of scales. Intellectually, the breakthrough that allowed him to accomplish this feat came when he dispensed with the traditional division of the octave into two unequal parts—a perfect fifth and a perfect fourth—and instead divided the octave exactly in half, to form two tritones ("the dread *diabolus in musica* of the medieval theorists," as he acknowledges, adding, "Bach himself had his knuckles rapped for flirting with such a division in school—but those German teachers were all sadists"). From there, he ordered his melodic patterns by successively filling in the intervals to form new scales. The afternoon Slonimsky went through the volume with me, delving deeper and deeper, across page after page of carefully laid out scales, each scale differing just slightly from the one before, he quickly lost me in his astral explications of the book's subtleties. Seeing that he'd done so, he doubled back. "Never mind about the musical implications," he said. "It's *beautiful*—it's Mondrian." For Slonimsky, I came to realize during the weeks of our conversations, structure *is* emotion. And in that sense, that afternoon in 1928 on East Seventy-fourth Street, he was indeed being ravished by the score of "Three Places in New England."

Ravished or not, he would find it a damnably difficult piece to envision conducting. "There was, for example,



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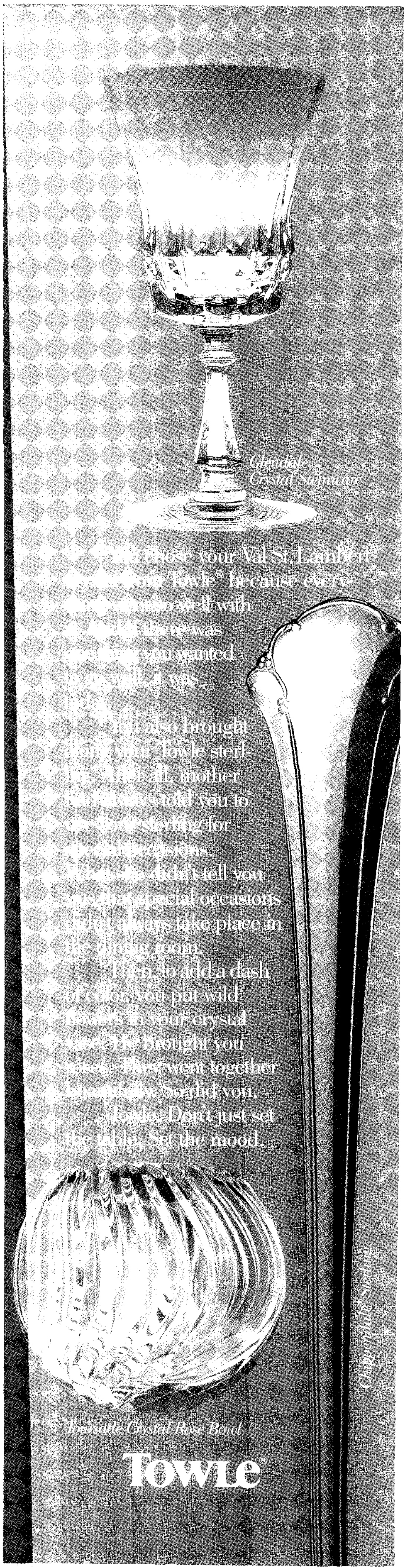
the second movement," Slonimsky recalled, "in which two bands seem to be entering a village square from opposite sides, both playing in standard 4/4 time, but one playing at a third faster rate than the other. This section could get pretty tricky for the conductor, because if you addressed yourself to the side of the orchestra that was playing faster, you ran the risk of losing the slower side, and vice versa. I'd encountered a similar problem with a canon by Wallingford Riegger, in which he had half the orchestra playing in 5/8 time and the other half in 2/8. Those boys really liked to mix things up. But it happened that I had discovered in myself a curious capacity: I seemed to be able, on the spur of the moment, to divide my brain in half, so that with one arm I could keep one tempo while with the other I projected an entirely different one. It was really quite simple." Slonimsky proceeded to demonstrate this weird talent, whose exercise seemed to transform him into a berserk semaphore messenger. His movements were brisk, powerful, exact—hilarious. He slowed down to give me a chance to verify the separate tempi, but my mind boggled in the attempt. "One of the critics," he now declared, without abandoning his performance, "proclaimed that my conducting was evangelical, for my left hand knew not what my right was doing." His eyes were gleaming joyously—full of mischief.

APP
CID
NO PRESE

This marvellous capacity and Slonimsky's over-all rhythmic hyper-sophistication served him in good stead on the night of January 10, 1931, when he and his orchestra premièred "Three Places in New England" in New York City's Town Hall. "The program went off without incident," he recalls. "I wasn't even disturbed by the concertmaster's whispering 'So far so good' at the conclusion of each movement. The reviews the next morning were mixed, but Ives himself, who attended the concert—something unusual for him—seemed satisfied. Interestingly, a few weeks later I went down to Havana, Cuba, to conduct a similar concert—Ives, Ruggles, Cowell—and the musicians there had far less difficulty negotiating the rhythmic complications of those pieces." Within months of thus presenting the première of one of the most important pieces of twentieth-century American music, Slonimsky was granted his American citizenship.

In the meantime, Ives, who was independently rich from his days as an insurance executive, told Slonimsky that he would like to sponsor him on a return trip to Paris so that he could "rig up" concerts of American music there. This foray, in the spring and early summer of 1931, proved immensely successful. Slonimsky arranged to give two concerts in Paris, and was able to engage one of the city's finest orchestras, which he had sufficient time to rehearse properly. The indefatigable Edgard Varèse, who was then in Paris, churned up a firestorm of publicity and anticipation. Announcements blanketed the kiosks. Slonimsky himself composed the program notes, encapsulating "Trois Coins de la Nouvelle-Angleterre" as "*géographie transcendentale par un Yankee d'un génie étrange et dense*" and Carl Ruggles' "Men and Mountains" as "*une vision brobdingnague par un inspiré de Blake*." Audiences packed both concerts, which also featured works by Cowell, Riegger, and Chávez, and the reviews were dazzling. "We have, *sans blague*, just discovered America, thanks to a Christopher Columbus who left Russia for Boston," declared the weekly *Gringoire*. "This Christopher Columbus is called Slonimsky." Other reviews hailed Slonimsky for "*une oreille et bras excellents*, *une remarquable autorité*, *une souple intelligence*." Exercising some of that *souple intelligence*, Slonimsky now took time out from his triumph to accompany Dorothy Adlow, who had come along on the trip, on a brief visit to the Mairie, where the two of them were wed, Varèse serving as best man.

So successful had this trip proved that a second one was almost immediately arranged for the following winter, this time to include Budapest and Berlin in addition to Paris. The first of Slonimsky's second pair of Paris concerts, in February, 1932, included works by Ives, Cowell, and Dane Rudhyar, and the Paris première of Béla Bartók's First Piano Concerto, with Bartók himself at the keyboard. The second concert featured the world première of Ruggles' "The Sun-Treader," Varèse's formidable "Arcana," and then, for balance, Brahms' Second Piano Concerto, with Artur Rubinstein as soloist. Once again, Slonimsky was showered with rave reviews, but this time Paris was only a workup for Berlin, where he had been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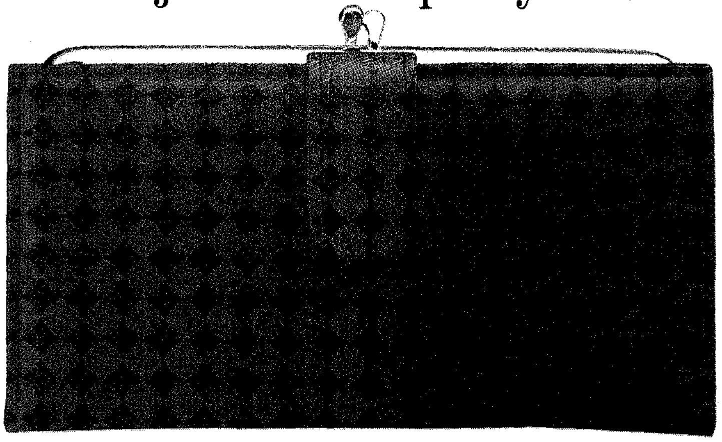
engaged to conduct the Philharmonic itself.

This proved to be one of the transforming moments of Slonimsky's life. "Never had I enjoyed such professional coöperation and competence," he recalls. "We went through four rehearsals with no complaints whatsoever. Indeed, what with all the newfangled percussion instruments I'd brought along, the Berlin Philharmonic players were like children in their enthusiasm. They particularly enjoyed the Lion's Roar, a bucket through which you pulled a rope. It had a wonderful name in German—the *Löwengebrüll*. During the concerts themselves, the sound that the orchestra achieved was close to perfection."

Slonimsky's glorious triumph in Berlin was to have a sadly constricted horizon, and as we sat talking about it that afternoon, and he pulled out a file to show me the yellowed clippings, he wasn't so much boastful as bewildered, still—dumbfounded that such promise could yield so little. The works—Ives, Cowell, Varèse, Ruggles, and so forth—evoked controversy, but the praise for Slonimsky's conducting was nearly unanimous. Surely the most impressive came from the redoubtable Alfred Einstein, of the *Berliner Tageblatt*, dean of the German critics, who hailed Slonimsky as "a talent of the first rank, of a quite elemental capacity to convince orchestra and audience alike." The words seem to have branded Slonimsky to the core. "*Ein Talent ersten Ranges*"—on several occasions, I heard him mutter them quietly, like a mantra, in persisting sad amazement.

Upon Slonimsky's return to America, his success continued for a few more seasons. He toured. In March, 1933, he presided over yet another epochal première, this time of Varèse's "Ionisation," scored for forty-one multifarious percussion instruments—a seemingly chaotic welter of sound deep under the surface of which lay a structure of shimmering precision. Varèse presently dedicated the piece to Slonimsky. Surprisingly, Columbia Records accepted "Ionisation" for a single disk, but it soon became evident that the complexities of the piece were beyond the capacities of the percussionists from the New York Philharmonic who had been commissioned to tackle them. Instead, Slonimsky assembled a remarkable impromptu pickup ensemble, including Cowell pounding tone-clusters on the

Not just another pretty case.



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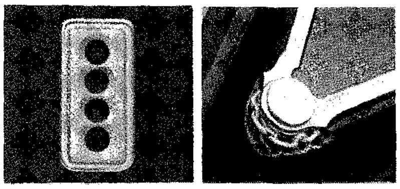

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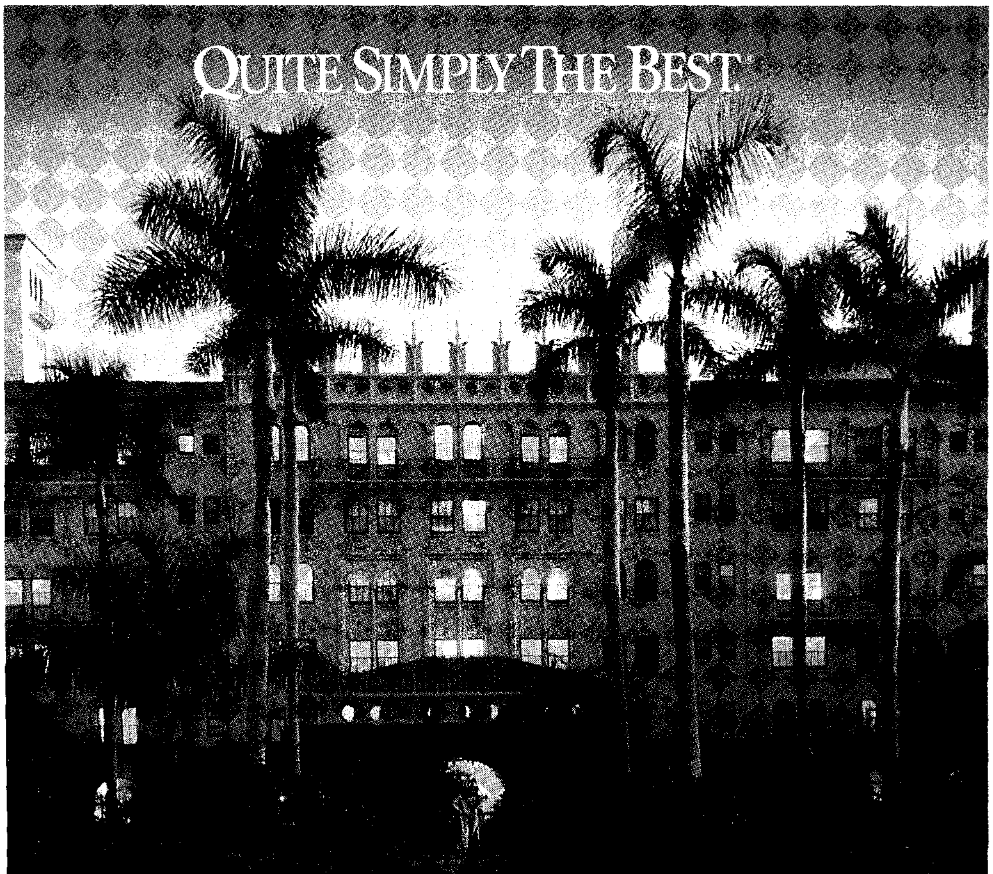

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piano, the composer Paul Creston on the anvils, Wallingford Riegger rubbing the güiro, the composer Carlos Salzedo on the Chinese blocks, and a very young William Schuman, who was assigned the crucial task of pulling the Lion's Roar. Varèse himself manned the necessary pair of sirens, which he had managed to borrow from a retired city fireman.

From this final triumph, Slonimsky pitched headlong toward disaster. Several months earlier, he had had a successful outing to Los Angeles, where he conducted the L.A. Philharmonic to considerable acclaim. On the basis of that performance, he'd been engaged to preside over the Philharmonic's entire summer season at the Hollywood Bowl. Then, in July, 1933, arriving to take up his assignment, he resolved to program a vigorous selection of contemporary work, starting with "Ionisation" itself. Such a bold undertaking, however, while it might have worked for a single concert in a downtown auditorium, was bound to cause trouble at the staid and saccharine Bowl. Slonimsky stuck to his guns, insisting on the importance of exposing contemporary audiences to contemporary music, and looking forward to the controversy. But those audiences proved instantaneously hostile, the orchestra mutinied, and the trustees quickly intervened. As Slonimsky puts it, following the first concerts of the series, "I was given the bum's rush out of Hollywood."

And suddenly his conducting career started to break up. The speed with which this happened is somewhat mysterious. Surely Slonimsky's adamant insistence on the necessity of programming vigorous, challenging, complex new music worked against him in the profoundly conservative context of mainstream American tastes. But now history, which had once made him sane, was also working against him. Ordinarily, he might have been able to return to Berlin, the scene of his greatest triumph, but this was already 1933, and Berlin was now cut off. (Even the year before, the Nazi critic Paul Zschorlich had excoriated the degenerate music that Slonimsky was trying to foist on the pure Aryan public. "The leader of this impudent exhibition was naturally a Jew," he pointed out in his review in *Germania*. "Slonimsky can call himself a hundred times an American, but one has only to watch his shoulder movements to recognize that he is a 100% Polish Jew.")

And then again, perhaps Slonimsky simply didn't have a talent for managing and exploiting his initial successes. This was not the sort of thing St. Petersburg intellectuals were well versed in doing; on the contrary, they were generally averse to any worldly exertions. At any rate, Slonimsky's conducting career was cut short. Nowadays, when, despite all his remarkable accomplishments, Slonimsky speaks of himself as a failure, this is what he really seems to have in mind—what he can't get out of his mind. As his former assistant Ana Daniel parsed it for me one afternoon, "the conducting clearly mattered to him enormously; in fact, in a way, Nicolas got everything he ever wanted except the one thing he ever really wanted, and that disappointment has surely remained a sorrow the rest of his life."

On the other hand, maybe he did get the one thing he ever really wanted—and, in fact, got it that very summer. For all the while he was battling with the orchestra and the trustees at the Hollywood Bowl, he was also monitoring developments back East, where Dorothy was seven months pregnant. Returning to Boston in defeat, he was presently consoled by the arrival of an infant daughter, whom he immediately named Electra—after the Greek word for "amber," or for some such reason. Within months, the debacle at the Hollywood Bowl was receding into irrelevance. He was too busy teaching his baby daughter Latin.

—Lawrence Weschler

(*This is the first part of a two-part article.*)

•

AMBASSADORS OK'D—Among President Reagan's 18 ambassadorial nominees receiving Senate approval Wednesday were Edward J. Perkins, who will be the first black to be U.S. ambassador to South Africa, and L. Paul Bremer, the new ambassador-at-large for counterterrorism. The action also filled vacancies in: the Vatican, Mexico, South Korea, Argentina, the Central African Republic, Peru, Kansas, Burundi, Mauritius, Zimbabwe, Solomon Islands, Honduras, Tanzania, Benin and Belize.—*Richmond (Ind.) Palladium-Item.*

Who's our man in Topeka?

•

FALL SEASON—Gavin MacLeod and Marion Ross star in the fast-paced 1962 comedy, "Never Too Late," which closed tomorrow at the Westport Country Playhouse.—*Fairfield (Conn.) Citizen-News.*

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ON AND OFF THE AVENUE

CHRISTMAS GIFTS FOR WOMEN

I went on a trip and in my grandmother's trunk I put . . .

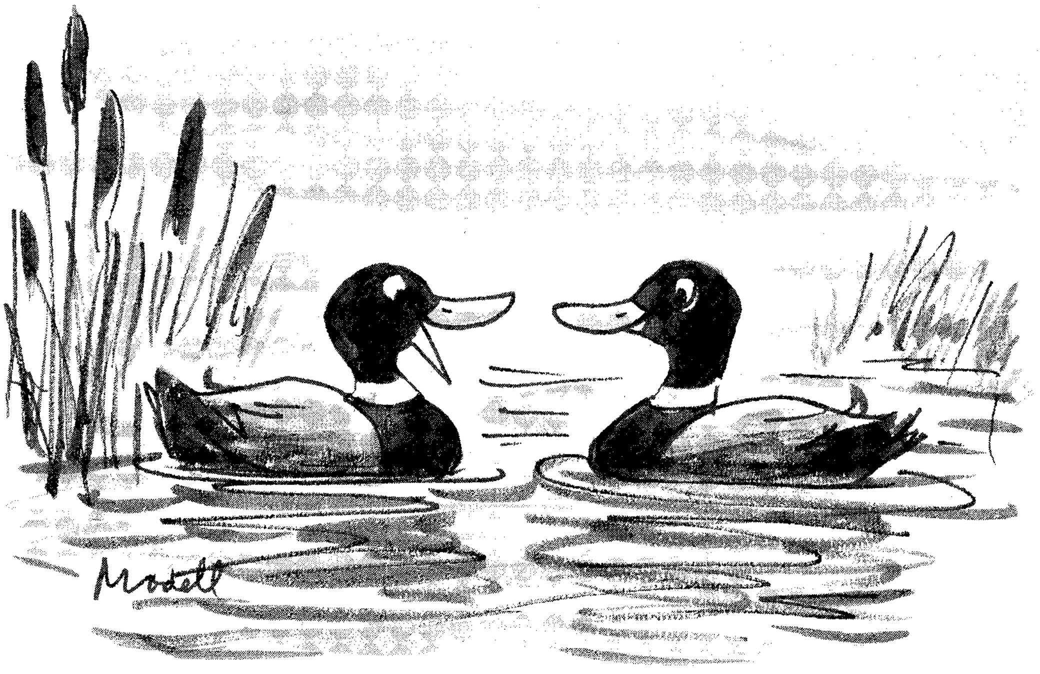
THIS year, as—suitably flushed, and melting of heart—we turn second to the right and then proceed straight on till morning, scrawling away all the while at our Christmas list, we take with us a well-worn trunk, trusting it not only to hold our shiny pile of boxes but, now and again, to do service as a makeshift bench. One hand, then, on its venerable lid (inside, in the striped-silk hold, are still a few illustrated storybooks pored over long ago by the twin sisters Prudence and Felicity) and the other holding a pencil, we prepare to report on our search for Christmas gifts for women.

•

A HAT . . .

"WHAT I love about it is when you wear it, it moves." Outside the plate-glass window of Victoria DiNardo's one-year-old hat shop, at 68 Thompson Street (Spring), as a messenger rode his bicycle by at an unthreatening clip, sunlight hit the bicycle's spokes and cast a corresponding shimmer on the wall. Like a line from a Miró canvas, a black-and-white fabric-covered wire spiral rising from a black linen cocktail hat bobbed obligingly. Miss DiNardo, who looks like Audrey Hepburn, smiled. In decades past—before fashion became a series of fictions assembled each morning, and often again in the evening, from the collective unconscious of a woman's closet—when a woman went out of her house she wore a hat. Around the shop, scattered like stalky, wakeful poppies, hats glow on stands, waiting for clear, untroubled brows. In the back, but visible from the street, is a sewing machine; all the hats are designed and custom-made by Miss DiNardo, who is both imaginative and practical, and is devoted to the sister goddesses of quality and charm. "I studied with Ann Albrizio at the Fashion Institute of Technology—she's been in the business for years, and she's a real stickler," Miss DiNardo said. A claret-colored velours cone hat, like the tapered end of a whelk shell, is to be worn atilt, Petrushka style; a cossack hat—made up in felt or Persian lamb—with a quintet of brass buttons aligned vertically at the front, has a swinging silk tassel; a hat Miss DiNardo calls a "topper," which is a cross between a bowler and a low top hat, is seen in sober black or chestnut brown but can be ordered in any fanciful hue; and, for an evening when soft frippery might be favored over a zebra spiral, here is a teasing flange of bronze pheasant feathers. All Miss DiNardo's hats are occasions solely for pleasure—like spontaneous journeys toward a church spire glimpsed in the distance or a blue wrinkle of sea sighted down a twisting lane—and, like all the best of ornament, seem to be outward manifestations of a sprightly spirit. The price of rayon-velvet earmuffs is $65, in ruby, grape, bottle green, or black, and the price range of the hats is from $95 to $250.

Bomba de Clercq, a toss of a hat away, at 100 Thompson Street (for travellers, its European address is Via dell'Oca 39, Rome), also brings one appealingly close to the nascence of the garments purveyed. The shop is the home of beautifully knitted original sweaters that might be the work of cultivated nesting birds weaving together bright bits and soft grasses. One sweater of each design is made up baby-size; the model is then pinned to one of a number of bins lining one side of the narrow room. You pull open the bin, and *voilà*—there is the sweater, grown up. Though Peter Pan would balk, Wendy would like it (thinking, perhaps, of the poor Lost Boys, measured for hollow trees). The sweaters, of silk, cashmere, alpaca, cotton, and wool yarns (used singly or in combination), hand-knitted or made on hand-driven machines, include a round-necked wool-and-cotton pullover with wide vertical ribbing in either dark or light natural woodsy colors. The ribbing looks like variously rained-on birch trunks, and the price is $340.



"That's funny, I thought you were a decoy at first, too."

A curious feature of this year's Christmas shopping is how often the gossip has been passed along, sotto voce, that this or that garment in such-and-such a store has appeared in such-and-such a movie. It is no accident that the stock at the shop called F.D.R. Drive, at 109 Thompson Street, resembles the clothing worn by Meryl Streep in the film "Out of Africa;" Milena Canonero, the costume designer, outfitted Miss Streep with the aid of F.D.R.'s two proprietors. Here, depending on the clothes' condition (exposure to dust, monsoons, or tremulous tears), prices of Edward-

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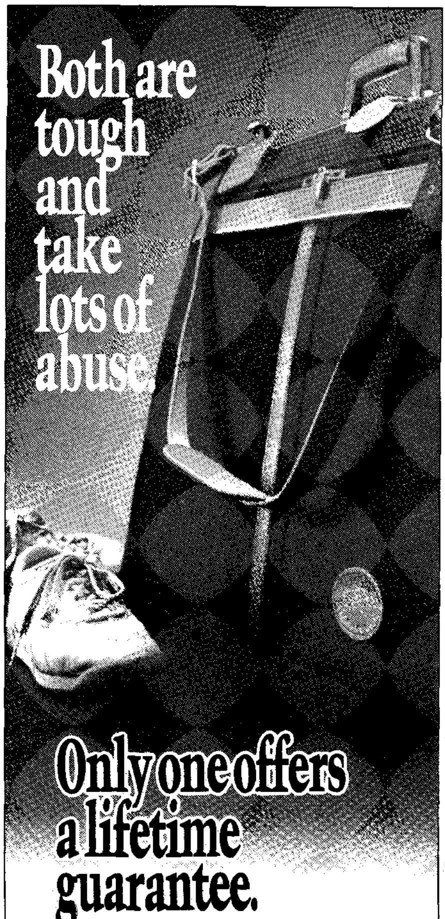
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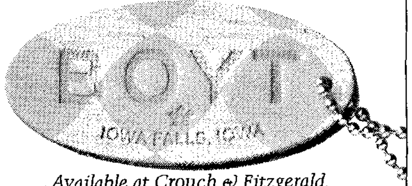

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ian dresses, petticoats, and blouses range from $175 to $750. Very pretty cotton batiste Victory blouses are from $150 to $175, and pliant camisoles beaded with lengths of ribbon are from $75 to $150. F.D.R. also has a remarkable collection of antique hats. Here is a black varnished straw boater with a black silk bow tied up in front. With the aid of wires, the black silk ends are sculptured into two horns that, like a bull's, point heavenward. The bow offers at its knot a fist-size bunch of slightly wilted fabric pinks. This hat is $175; others are $75 to $225.

More opportunities for playing dress-up are to be found at Norma Kamali's new venue, OMO SoHo (the acronym stands for "On My Own"), at 113 Spring Street (Broadway), where, front and center, nine video monitors show continuous footage starring Miss Kamali's clothes. From the portal, the floor looks like worn concrete; it is—surprise—gray plush carpeting. Up above, as if charmed by Top Forty music, exposed ceiling pipes painted gold snake across the golden pressed-tin ceiling. Miss Kamali, a modern Anita Loos, specializes in nineteen-forties glamour—from the skin out. She supplies a pair of lush, dreamy Hedy Lamarr tap pants of silk in a ripe-melon hue, trimmed with écru alençon lace; $60. Panties are $70, and a black cotton Diamond Lil *bustier*, with back zipper, is $74. A sea-foam-green, thick suède jacket has an overlay floral design incorporating plum, pink, and copper, and it brings to mind Matisse's portrait of the green-robed Moroccan; the price is a heady $1,002. Here, too, are faux-fur coats—leopard, what Kamali calls Tiger Eye, and Appaloosa. Styled like bathrobes, full-length coats with huge shawl collars are $900; similarly printed boxy jackets with notched collars are $390. On black cotton gauntlets leopard-print cuffs slant toward the wrists, fostering the illusion that the wearer has a fur skin; in all three patterns, the gloves are $65.

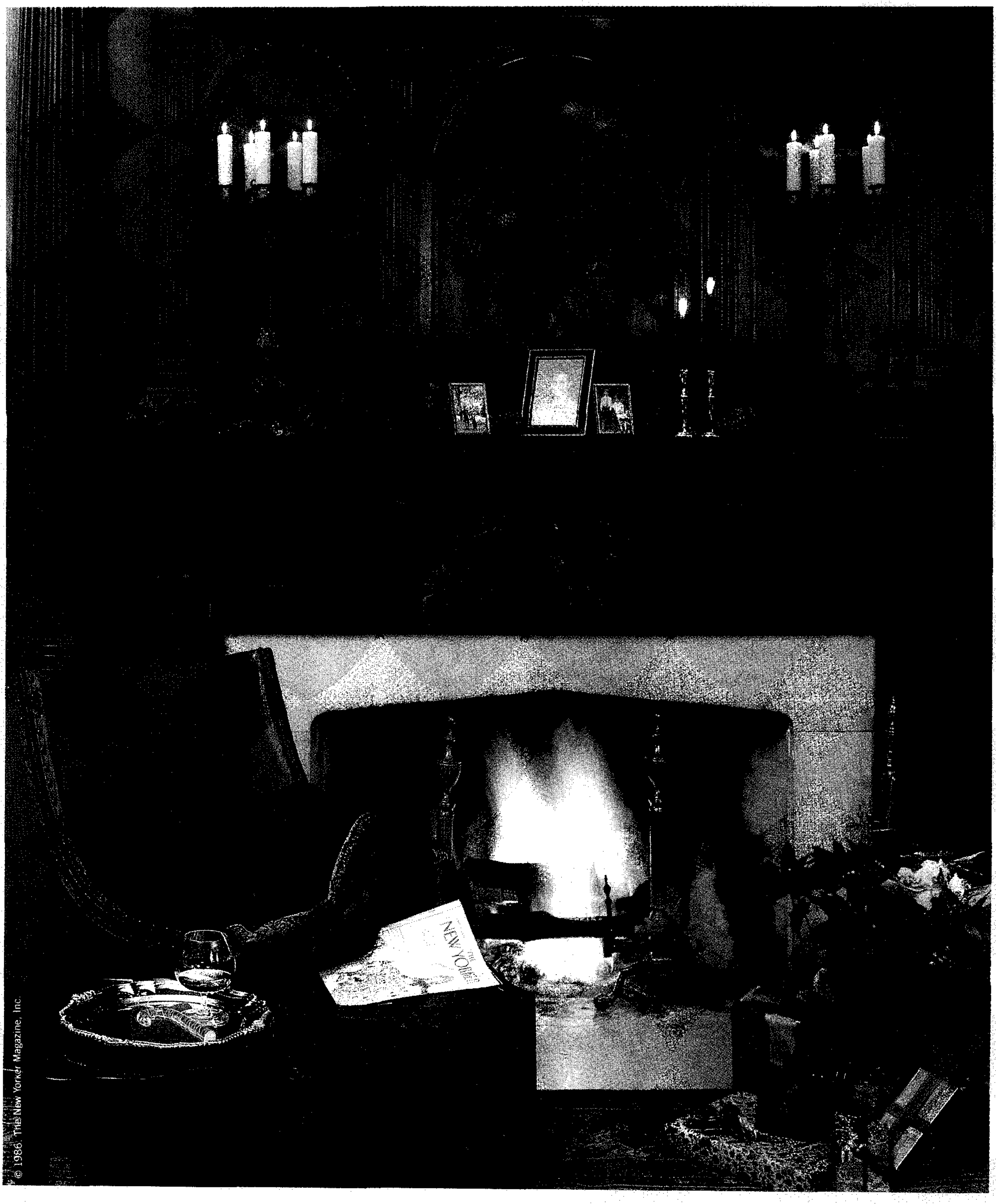
•

A hat, a Kabuki brush . . .

The alchemist Robert Lee Morris, 409 West Broadway (Spring), this year continues his game of Animal, Vegetable, or Mineral with a new oxidation process, which leaves a mottled tortoiseshell pattern on bronze. A five-inch-long lapel pin shaped like an abstract musical clef, for scoring the music of the spheres, is $175; three-inch-long crocodile clip-on teardrop earrings are $260 the pair; and a cuff bracelet that wraps gently around the forearm like a steadying hand is $280. Eschewing golden eggs, Mr. Morris offers a henhouseful of sterling-silver ones, each poignantly cracked. An eighteen-inch cracked-egg necklace (inch-long eggs lying end to end) is $810, and a thirty-four-inch belt to match is $1,400.

The accessories counter at Patricia Field, bivouacked below street level at 10 East 8th Street, holds a mesmerizing watch. Its face, which is large, is a hologram of an Egyptian pyramid; when the wearer turns her wrist to check the time, the pyramid vanishes, replaced by hour and minute hands. This dialectic—a set-to between "Here today and gone tomorrow" and "Every minute counts"—might serve to infuse into a usually frantic recipient a sense of the need for a long perspective on history's shifting sands; the price is $65. In a corner by the door is the cosmetics department. On sale for private or public ritual theatrics is the pressed powder used by Kabuki actors. Extremely matte, it is meant to be mixed with water; the price is $11. Kabuki brushes, for applying the powder, are $7.50 each, and there's a good selection of other, surprisingly soft Japanese lamb's-hair brushes, including eyelash/brow combs, all priced between $3 and $16. The purpose of some interesting plastic trays is to hold lipsticks that have been turned open all the way and then cut off at their roots; from the trays, which have parking space for between five and fourteen severed sticks, lipstick is more easily applied with one's fingers. The prices range from $21 to $54. Patricia Field can also supply individual applications, in small jars, of semipermanent hair color. Thirty-two Fauvist tints are possible, including bright daffodil, fire, plum, apple green, poppy red, and lagoon blue; $9 each. For festive wear, there is a choice of false eyelashes—silver, gold, or rainbow—at $5 per pair.

Up the steps and into the cerulean air, and we proceed north to Charlotte Moss & Co., Ltd., which, having just moved from 48 West 10th Street to 131 East 70th Street, supplies both decorators and private citizens with the accoutrements of the leisured class. The most restful of the items here are hand-stippled custom-made Portuguese wicker bed trays, painted with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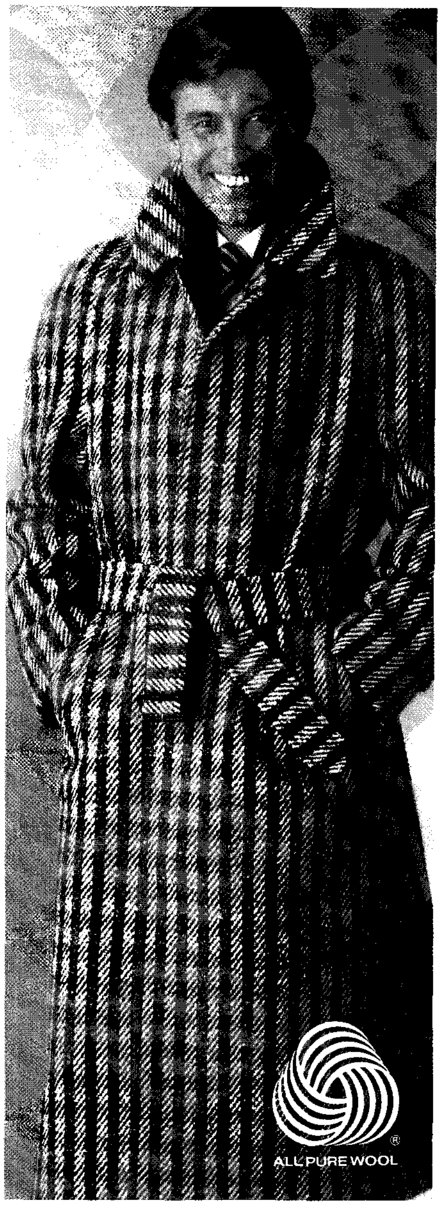

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trompe-l'oeil butterflies, single roses, and the ticket stubs from last night's gala. Most women we know would be so touched to have coffee handed to them before the day demanded their vertical presence, compos mentis, that they wouldn't care if it was served up in a mess kit, but for those who have grown so accustomed to breakfast in bed that they have begun to carp about toast crumbs the price ranges from $325 to $450. A set of two China-trade rose-pattern tea bowls, with saucers, dating from 1790, is $250; and an endearing antique sterling-silver tea infuser, in the form of a dollhouse teapot, is $60. Victorian needlepoint pillows, to gently support one's back, range in price from $250 to $1,000, and the designs, some with lapidary beadwork, include armorial crests, effusive florals, and a tow-headed child officiously training a puppy. Late-Victorian paisley throws, such as the Queen might have pulled around her ample shoulders at Balmoral, cost from $495 to $895 (sizes range from four feet square to six by twelve, for draping over a concert grand); an especially versatile example has a different weave on either side, and thus could enable someone to camouflage the fact that she is wearing the drawing-room piano shawl as an evening wrap. It's $795, and the predominant hues are garnet and ruby. To complete the panorama of a Wallace Stevens-esque Sunday Morning, Charlotte Moss can supply a turn-of-the-century American-made birdcage, sans cockatoo. Two feet high, it is built of whitewashed wood and twisted wire. The price is $285. Softly tinted lithographs that depict Louis XVI interiors designed by Georges Rémon, published in Paris in 1880 by Thézard, are $395, in gilt frames; for forays afield, antique maps of such exterior regions as Middlesex, the Channel Islands, and Leicestershire and views of such subjects as a "Mincing Pie House" are from $30 to $50, matted but not framed.

THE Women's Store at Barneys New York has come of age this year, and, as in the aftermath of a débutante ball, representatives of respectable houses and some bright new faces to wake up the crowd are there now, in a mutually profitable arrangement, as house guests. Audible hammering continues behind alabaster walls, and there remains the climate of hurried whispered conferences about frizzled hair, the trick of wearing one good glove and carrying the soiled one, and keeping one's back to the wall so the burnt breadth doesn't show which characterized the admonitions handed down before Meg and Jo's first grown-up party. But, like some fresh-faced lass brought up on a diet of good taste and stratospheric expense, the new store, all seven floors of it, looks just fine. As at another New York landmark planned on a spiral, one can take an elevator to the top and work down—here, too, the floors are also accessible on foot, but by curving stairs rather than a ramp—although, unlike the journey described in the books that Meg, Jo, Beth, and Amy found under their pillows on Christmas morning (crimson-covered, green, dove-colored, and blue), this one does not go through a Slough of Despond, and the doors at each floor open to Vanity Fair. In the Celestial City, on the sixth floor, is an aviary of evening shoes so lively they seem to twitter; ready to swoop and dive in the twilight, they carry the label of the taffeta-loving English designer Anouska Hempel. A purple-finch velvet pump has a double satin bow at the toe and a flirtatious single bow across the heel, and the vamp is outlined with a ribbon shirred so that it resembles birthday-cake icing; the price is $395. Close by is a pair of flat sling-back slippers covered with green-going-to-red taffeta moiré. Each shoe is embellished by a twisted double accordion-pleated fan that can be clipped on anywhere, as whimsy dictates: on toe or heel, or even on this fall's real or ersatz sleek ponytail. The shoes are $430. Peering around the bend, we allowed ourselves a bow in the direction of the court commanded by Karl Lagerfeld, couture's Mr. Darcy, and then we wandered downstairs, to five, which is Barneys' mecca for devotees of lingerie. A floating gown of smoke silk chiffon has a meticulously hand-smocked ruffled yoke, which is draped to slip off a pearly shoulder; $980, by Holly Lueders. Also in waiting here are silk-satin tea gowns by Louie, intended for photo-opportunistic sleeping beauties. The gowns, in black, champagne, peach melba, or snow white, have diverse detailing (here a tulip hem, there a trembling bow on an operatic décolletage) and—because their fabric is doubled for propriety—could also sally abroad at the cocktail hour. The price is $225, and for weekend parties they solve the dual problem of (a) a dress and (b) a nightgown. For the many evenings *chez soi* when the idea of swishy entrances and exits is remote but prettiness has not been thrown out with the bathwater, Maurie Welsh offers sleepwear run up in white cotton piqué. Sleeveless milkmaid shifts in soft heavy cotton fall to scalloped knee-length hems, and could be worn (after a donor's long and hard consideration of the recipient's tolerance for being quoted at from Thomas Hardy) to charming effect with baggy bloomers here that are edged with cotton lace. The collection is priced from $165, and all of it, come summer, could go down to the beach for a picnic. For warding off soft breezes, Barneys can supply a ladylike robe, full-blown from the imagination of Barbara de Wolfe. Of polished cotton brocade, in lemon with wallpaper stripes gentled by rosebud nosegays, the robe has the sheen of Limoges china, and the price is $225—roughly equal to the cost of four teacups. Next, our gaze hovered on a fog silk puff of a short-sleeved blouse. By Andra Gabrielle, the blouse is finished with gossamer cross-stitching and, like a spider's web sparkling with dew, is beaded with seed pearls. The price is $315. Descending to the fourth floor, we peeked into Barneys' chamber of fit-for-a-queen ball gowns. Here, for one of the Hesperides—guardians of trees with golden apples, golden leaves, and golden branches—is a shimmering gold silk dress by the Welsh designer Patricia Lester. Echoing the Grecian lines of the legendary creations of Fortuny, the narrow pleats ripple and refract light rather than fall straight. And they are embroidered with tiny bronze beads rather than with Fortuny's traditional Murano glass; the price is $1,895. And, for pointing out the début of the evening star, the store has a pair of antique black suède evening gloves, patterned at the wrists with leaves outlined in gold thread. Displayed in a black case, under glass, they seem to beckon from the depths of an autumnal pool; the price is $350.

Amateurs that we are, we skipped Barneys' third floor, which is devoted to the needs of the impressive personage whom the store has dubbed "The Professional Woman," and halted, on the second, before an unusually spunky wool riding coat. The jacket is made in Belgium by Dries Van Noten, and its top quarter is white, the rest is navy, and the whole is lined with red-and-white striped silk. Double-breasted, with brass buttons, it incorporates, besides the usual pockets, an

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extra one, small enough for a lump of sugar. White wool trousers flecked with navy complete the ensemble; the jacket is $450, and the pants are $155. Sent here from Lee Anderson's genteel East Side parlor (23 East 67th Street) is a schoolgirl dress, also double-breasted, in Black Watch plaid. It has a polite sailor tie edged in black grosgrain, and a flared skirt, and, as with all garments that go out into the world from that address, the dressmaking is meticulous. The price is $550. For a frugal fifty dollars less, Barneys will relinquish a nanny's cashmere cardigan. The color is butterscotch, and the pattern is thistle stitch. Humming "Christmas Is Coming," we tripped happily down to the ground floor, which is honeycombed with the products of an assortment of Queen Bees. Here is the *parfumerie*, wafting the heady scents of countless nectars, love potions all, and here are the embossed, leathery prints of the Fendi sisters, not far from the cosmetic counters' Elysian Fields, where the polishes and shadows lie open like a hundred meadow blooms.

For mortals with end-stopped pocketbooks, Barneys' CO/OP (the name conjures up both the idea of camaraderie and apartment buildings equipped with deplorable bathtubs but topped by swimming pools), which is tactfully not situated below the stairs but reached through a back room on the first floor, is the place to pick up, purportedly for a reasonable price, a souvenir of the store's merchandise. It may begin to make sense for clothing stores such as Barneys, like museums, to install gift shops with racks of postcards to take home as remembrances of their collections; leaving that to more entrepreneurial souls, however, we report that the CO/OP shoe store has among its many happy prospects a cheerful pair of shiny red rainboots by the redoubtable Keds company. The price is $32, and for a woman who, at least on rainy days, has her feet on the ground these will carry her dryly through them.

◆

A HAT, A KABUKI BRUSH, A PAIR OF SKATES . . .

HARK, the herald angels sing! The refurbishing of the Wollman Skating Rink, that municipal never-never land, is finished! Skates are the only footwear we know of that has a tendency to be misplaced in pairs, and many pairs have surely disap-

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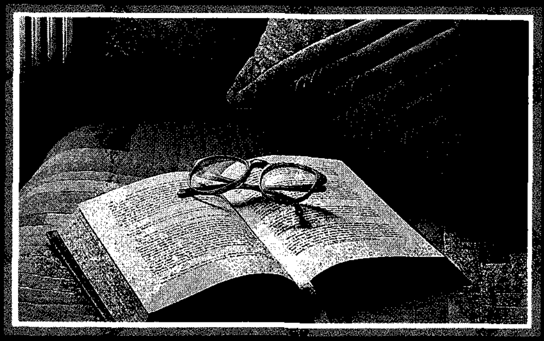

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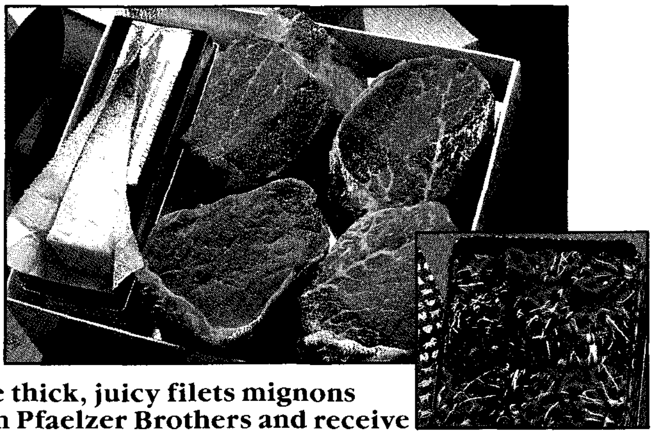

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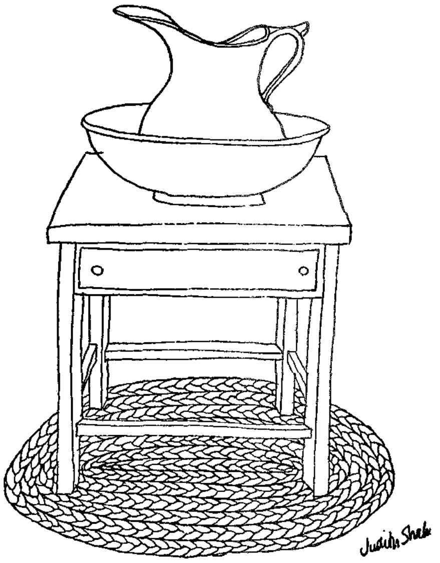
peared during the six years when the rink was a black hole in the ground. Leaving Barneys to its solitary splendor, we hiked over to Paragon, at 867 Broadway (18th). A good all-around skate for a woman who doesn't take frozen surfaces too seriously is the Riedell Ladies Figure 120W, which is leather inside and out, and has a Sheffield-steel blade. The price is $76. For fancier footwork, the euphoniously named Silver Star boot, also by Riedell, has a double-layered leather sole, a sponge-lined tongue for additional padding—the cosseted foot lies within like the filling in a sandwich—and the same easy-to-sharpen, hollow-edged blade as the 120W; $200.

Many previously unathletic persons have been seduced into the great wintry outdoors (on weekends that would usually have been consigned to rereadings of "Barchester Towers") by the growing popularity of cross-country skiing. It also appeals to puritans, who like a sport to offer something besides pure pleasure, such as the ability to get around when the heave-ho of the village snowplow is not forthcoming. For rugged, off-trail skiing, the yellow fibre-glass Epoke 900 employs full-torsion-box construction, with laminate top and bottom. The skis are made in Norway by Landsem Skifabrikk, and they cost $147 a pair (waxable) or $157 (waxless). For trail skiing, on days when bushwhacking is not expected, there is the white Fischer Europa Crown S ski, which costs $100 and reputedly "floats on air." In spite of the vogue for level thinking, a number of sports-loving women remain hellbent on getting to the bottom fast. To abet them in this heretical inclination, Paragon sells a handsome ski by Lacroix, for the



Picture it.
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"Famous *what?*" say all three. "Grouse," say you. "The Famous Grouse."

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Admit casually that it costs a bit more than Dewar's, *"but a tad less than yours, sir."*

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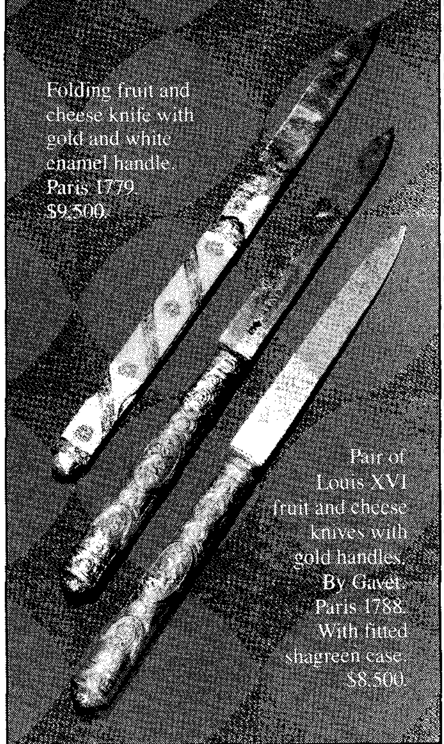

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intermediate skier, called La Griffe. Extremely flexible, the model—our genial guide at Paragon, Jeff Pascal, told us—is very forgiving, and is meant for the skier who wants to look good without exerting a lot of effort. In winter white, the skis are $465 to $550, depending on which binding one chooses. Playing Grace Jones to the La Griffe is the Course Slalom racing ski, by Dynastar. A quick-reacting ski, to be used aggressively at high speeds, it is tricky to control; with choice of bindings, $420 to $500 the pair. Downhill ski boots start at $65, and $275 will provide the newfangled Raichle RX Hot Lady heated boots; these are equipped with a rechargeable battery pack, and the heat can be switched on and off at will. In fire-engine red; $275. Ski goggles by Carrera have double fog-free lenses, plastic frames, and webbed straps, and screen out all ultraviolet rays; the price is $25. For "Little House on the Prairie" conditions, Paragon has a selection of snowshoes by Sherpa (constructed of wood and rawhide) and Snowcraft (steel, aluminum, and strung neoprene). The prices of these homely items range from $80 to $136; and, to keep deep snows out of socks and cuffs, 60/40 breathable-nylon gaiters have nylon drawstring tops and cost $16.95 a pair. Happy-go-lucky on concrete, roller skates are among the most urban of footwear. The professional (imagine!) GMII Roller Skate consists of a Riedell 220 boot, a steel precision plate, a jump bar, and toe stops, and it comes with two wrenches. All this for $165, and another $40 to $55 will equip you with a good set of wheels, with bearings. The new Ladies Roller Derby skate, Model U-985, with a cast-aluminum plate, has the convenience of indoor-outdoor wheels made of polyurethane. The price is $50.

Happy as we were, wheeling uptown in our roller skates, we paused for a moment to take them off (and pack them into our trunk, to be left in the checkroom) at the gates of the irreproachable Pierpont Morgan Library, where, looking up, we admired again the carved angel over the door. Inside, in the library's bookstore, we found pale-blue notepaper, made by Crane and printed with the library's angel in white. Ten notes, with ten white-lined envelopes, are $9.95. Defiant in the face of alternatives, a few women we know prefer to spend their weekends with jigsaw puzzles, contending that, when they are over and done with, all the pieces fit. A puzzle on sale here is a fantastic cave landscape depicting the meeting of Odysseus and Calypso—a reproduction of a painting by Jan Brueghel the Elder and Hendrik de Clerck. There are three hundred and eight hand-cut wooden pieces, the puzzle measures thirteen inches by sixteen and a half, the price is $24.95, and there are no boring stretches of blue sky. To check the contours of a recalcitrant piece, a four-inch magnifying glass with a delftware handle might be helpful; it could also be used to examine the underside of a leaf in one's garden. The price is $25. To plan next spring's flower beds, a garden journal, designed like an address book but with tabs indicating months of the year rather than letters of the alphabet, is published by H. George Caspari, and is sold at the bookshop for $24.95. (Yearly refills can be obtained from Caspari's headquarters, at 225 Fifth Avenue.) Like the journal that a hostess—Lady Ottoline, say—might keep on the preferences of favored guests, it has spaces to be filled with each plant's popular name, botanical name, and blooming period, and there is a graph at the back for the garden's over-all plan. To enclose with a gift or send as a token of the season, the library shop has an interesting selection of facsimile postcards, including portions of Mozart's manuscript for his Horn Concerto in E Flat; a letter in backward writing from Jane Austen to her niece Cassandra, which begins "I hsiw uoy a yppah wen raey;" and a note from Elizabeth I to Thomas Seymour, Baron Seymour of Sudeley, containing the resonant line "I am a frend not wone with trifels nor lost with the lack." The cards are thirty-five cents each.

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A HAT, A KABUKI BRUSH, A PAIR OF SKATES, A FLASHLIGHT . . .

FOR those possessed of foresight, it is possible to assemble by a devoted perusal of mail-order catalogues a heap of Christmas presents tall enough to dwarf the Rockefeller Center tree. Accounting for only the merest fraction of the glossy temptations that arrive in our mailbox this time of year, faithful as the returning swallows, are the goods offered up by the heirs of Mr. L. L. Bean, who will gladly send anyone who requests them many booklets itemizing Bean's stock, not only now but all through the year (L. L. Bean, Freeport, Maine 04033; 800-

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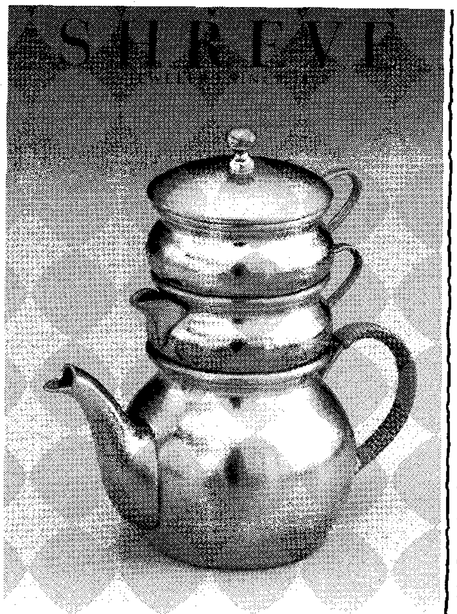

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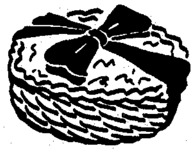

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221-4221). For women who want to be really warm, Bean makes a hardy parka called the North Face Serow, which is filled with twelve ounces of goose down covered with a quilted inner shell of 2.2-ounce nylon taffeta. On an average-size woman, the coat reaches to mid-thigh. The outer shell is wind- and water-repellent, and its complement of pockets includes two for warming the hands and one to hold a map of Annapurna. In graphite, tan, or navy, the coat is $199.50. Regular bluejeans are often not sufficient for treks in the freezing cold. Bean has come up with a fabric called Winter Denim, a cotton-and-wool blend that is much warmer than denim. A pair of Winter Denim jeans is $36.50. Share and share alike between the sexes has not, oddly, extended to who drives the car on moderately long car trips and who reads the map. To assist the bright-eyed pros whose job it is to find that last turn at the covered bridge by reading in the light emanating from the dashboard, Bean offers a Mini Mag-Lite, which is five and five-eighths inches long, and thus could be easily stored in the glove compartment. When equipped with alkaline batteries, it remains bright for three or four hours; then one might suggest going back to the gas station to ask directions. In black or eye-catching gold, the light is $13. The Pocket Survival Tool can jump in to help with other short-term emergencies. It measures four inches closed, weighs five ounces, and includes a Phillips-head screwdriver, needle-nosed pliers, a penknife, and an always useful can-and-bottle opener; $29.75. For $110, Bean will send off into the field a pair of Nikon 7×35 Naturalist's Binoculars. They weigh one pound three and a half ounces, and might be taken after a day of bird-watching to the Metropolitan Opera.

White Flower Farm (Litchfield, Connecticut 06759) stocks, besides its plethora of plants, tools and aids for the serious gardener. A foot-powered bulb planter forty inches tall and weighing seven pounds has a cylindrical stainless-steel blade that makes fast work of the ordinarily penitential task of putting in jonquils. The bulb planter is tulip red. It is $55, and so are Wilkinson edging shears that have thirty-two-inch tubular-steel handles; according to the farm, that is the distance from most people's arms to the ground. Thirteen-inch-high black rubber boots from France are $28.50.

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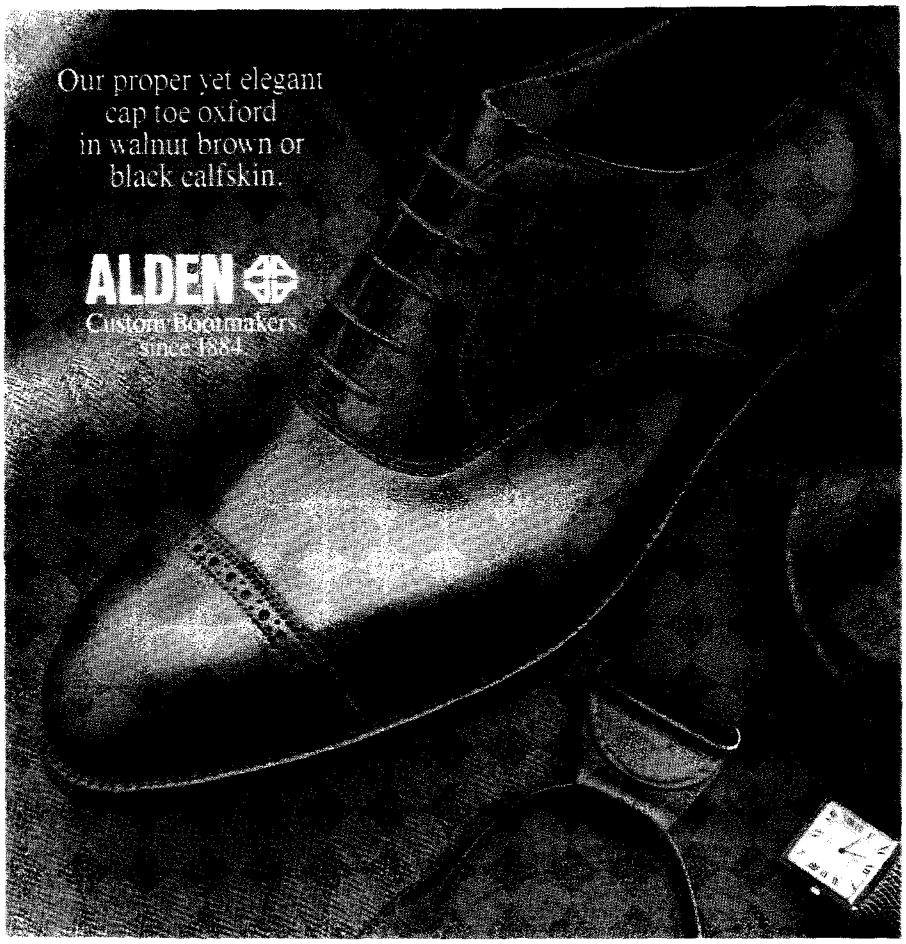
A friend who has recently bought a weedy lot in the country and has since been constructing dream salads of homegrown radicchio, arugula, and new peas might be presented with a ceremonial stainless-steel trowel—this one has a beechwood handle—for an outlay of $18, along with a copy of "The Complete Shade Gardener," by George Schenk. Plants are keyed to climate, and the book, also available through White Flower Farm, is $26. And, for gathering flowers properly, here is a garden basket woven from durable oak strips. Its accommodating measurements are eighteen inches by thirteen by four deep, and the price is $24.

Offering up a prayer to guide our order forms through the free-for-all of the Christmas mails, we dropped them into a mailbox and went around the corner to pay a call on Paul Stuart, haberdasher to gentlewomen (as well as gentlemen). Here we were whisked off, immediately and amid much ado, to exclaim over some alligator belts. We report that the belts are one and a half inches wide and are fastened by means of sterling-silver buckles. The price is $368, or about fifteen dollars an inch around a fashionably slim waist. Paul Stuart has this year revved up the traditional Irish fisherman's sweater by dyeing it cerise, a color fated to cause mirth in any longline fisherman. One oversize fits all, the price is $360, and the sweater is to be worn, according to those in the know, accompanied by lavender and cerise wool fishnet scarves. The pretty, picaresque effect is of a fisherman who was nearly drowned in a vat of dye. The scarves are $86 apiece. Pocket squares of decorous silky georgette paisley foulard, which might be used for hoisting as distress signals or for waving au revoir, are $18. A Maude Gonne blouse, of black Irish lace, has a clover motif; the lace shadows a black silk camisole, and the blouse closes with pavé marcasite buttons. It is $286, and might play opposite an ankle-length skirt of black angel-doux suède. The skirt, which is fully lined and has an inverted front pleat, also comes in tobacco and heliotrope, and it costs $810. For evenings when a certain level of horsiness is properly indicated but no action is likely to be taken, here is a stable of "National Velvet" jodhpurs. In black or forest green, they have neat pearl buttons on the ankle shaft; $192.

Before entering the Grand Canal of Fifty-seventh Street, clogged with



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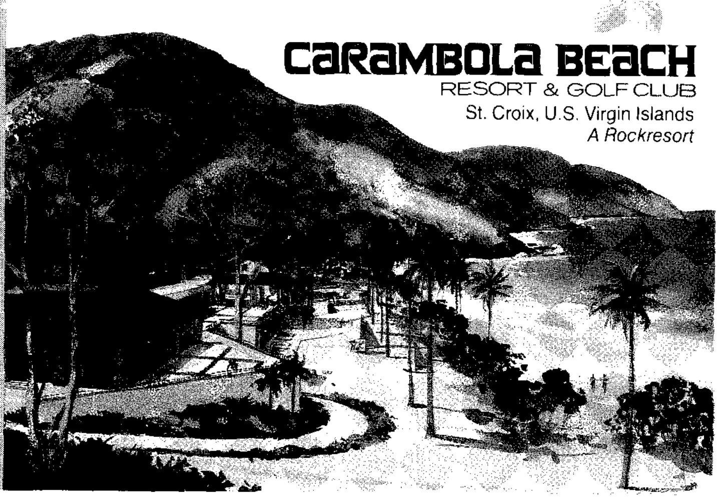

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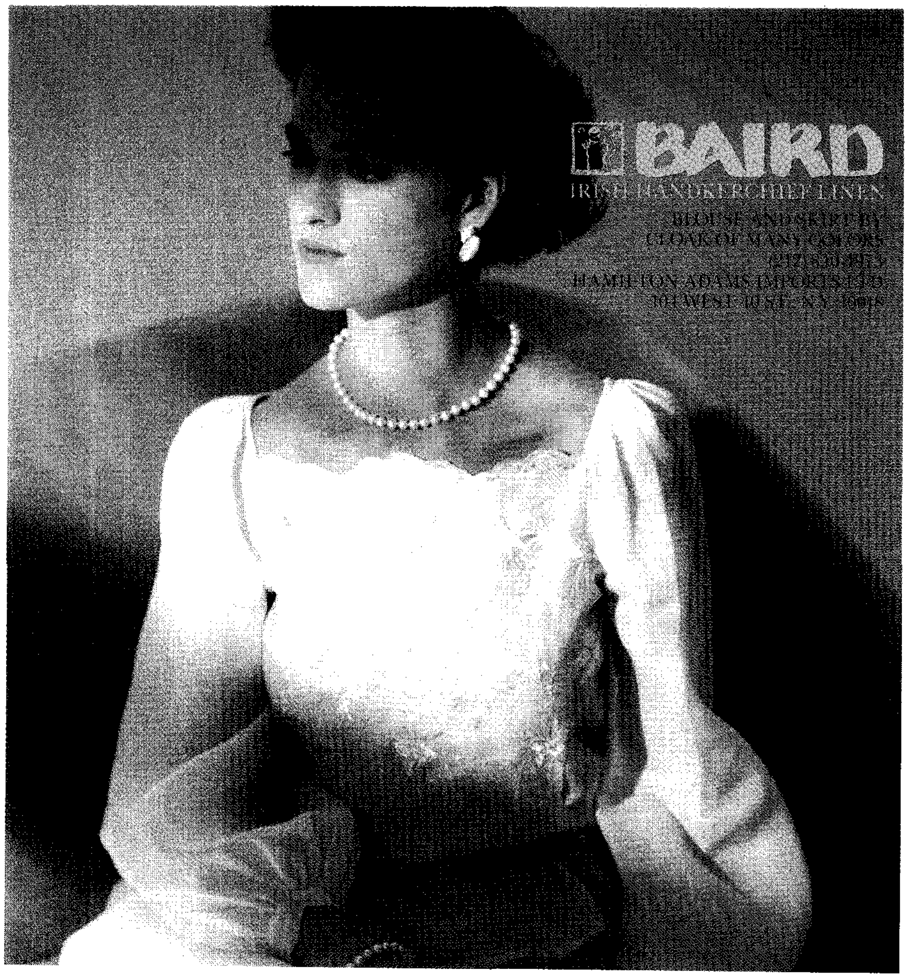
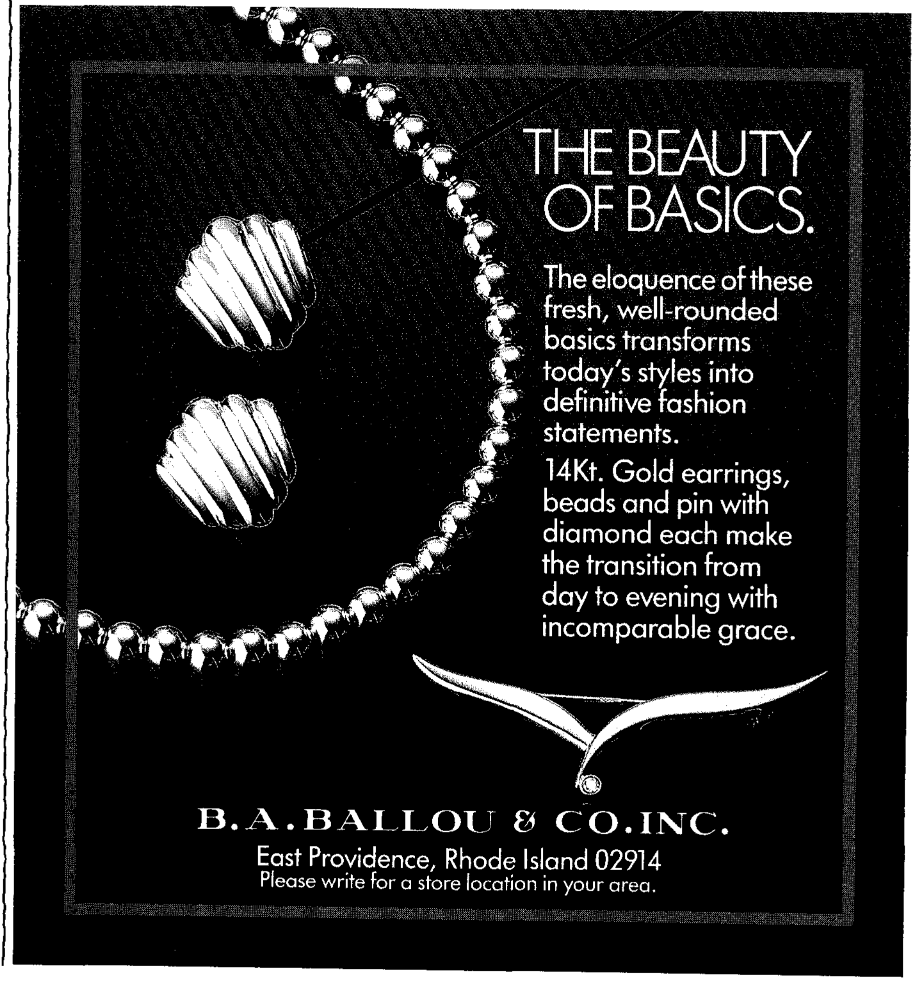
long black limousines, we stepped into the lofty rooms at 7 West 56th Street inhabited by the clear, colorful designs that are steadfastly produced by the Finnish firm of Marimekko. Here is a farm stand of geometrically ribbed soft wool dresses cut like roomy T-shirts. The dresses have sashes and detachable shoulder pads, and come in bishop's purple, cherry, pumpkin, tomato, or leaf green; $280. Striped ankle-length cotton T-shirts that can be used as nightgowns or, hiked up and belted, worn as dresses are $90, and orange-and-yellow striped socks are $11 a pair in knee-length and $9 when they're ankle-length. Among Marimekko's perennial selection of silk-screened cotton dresses, a particularly lovely one has an asymmetrical button closure and a design of black vertical bands with blades of light shining through, like an urban sunset viewed through the supports of an elevated train track. The price of this one is $100, and all of the cotton dresses are under $200.

We crossed Fifty-seventh Street and entered the familiar veneered doors of Bergdorf Goodman, where the Annick Goutal perfume counter, newly transplanted from the Rue de Castiglione to this one-and-only spot, has enough bottles and glitz to satisfy even the most scent-mad Belinda. Made entirely from natural ingredients (a chant now so ubiquitous that unbidden at its heels comes another: "eye of newt, and toe of frog") and underscored by sentiments from Paul Valéry ("Scents have immense powers over our memories and thereby over our feelings"), the scents include the lifeblood of many flowers, and go by such names as Eau de Ciel, Camille, Lavande, and Sables. Only Passion ("Sexy, elegant, hence the name") and Heure Exquise are available as perfume. The price per ounce is $220. Toilet water, in some cases without alcohol, costs from $27 to $98 for sizes ranging from one ounce to six and six-tenths ounces, and $35 will buy six and two-thirds ounces of skin-replenishing Bain de Lait. Bath soaps, resplendent in gold wrappers, are $12 a cake.

Ever contemplative, the quixotic Judith Leiber continues her quest for the perfect minaudière. Last year, we reported that gold Buddhas had replaced bejewelled cats; this year, Buddhas have been abandoned in favor of the egg. Decorated, Fabergé style, with medallions of garnet, topaz, and tourmaline, the egg holds in its secret recesses a tiny comb and mirror. It cracks open and closed with the aid of a quail's-egg-size amethyst, and the fairy-tale price, representing Miss Leiber's assessment, perhaps, of the immense value of her studies in the wisdom of the East, is $1,550 more than last year's price of $1,300. For the clear light of day, the Parisian handbag designer Anna Choi, also transcending the dispiriting limitations of the straight edge, has come up with a bag shaped like a hatbox. In green saddle leather, it swings from a shoulder strap, is twelve and a half inches in diameter, and looks snappy. It costs $485. When there were fashion maxims, an oft-repeated one was that it is always better to be underdressed than overdressed. In a season of undistinguished handbags (the prevailing trend is that anything slathered over with crocodile looks good; perhaps next fall skins will be dispensed with altogether, and replaced by quilted and shellacked hundred-dollar bills), Donna Karan's collection of pressed-leather accessories looks especially smart. A ladylike, draped envelope bag comes in amethyst, espresso, or black, and the price is $435. Leaving the six intervening floors of Bergdorf's to their own ample resources, we glided skyward to the newly renovated top story, where, like cumulus clouds, soft terry-cloth robes by Frette came into view. Three-quarter length, the robes—in toast, peach, or eggshell—are made variously enticing by contrasting piping, appliqués, and peacock-weave jacquard lapels; they are priced from $190 to $210. Close at hand are snow-white bath mitts by Michelle David for Carpe Diem; they are $20 each. A practical gift that might be slipped into a package containing one of this Christmas's woollens is a packet of red cedar or lavender moth chasers. In each packet are four sachets containing scented moth chips covered in periwinkle or buttercup calico; the price per packet is $15.

Eager to be out once again in the open air, amid the ringing of bells and the roasting of chestnuts, we rode back downstairs, pausing only to admire, on the first floor, a pair of hand-knitted mittens by Artwork of London. Modelled on a traditional Eskimo design, the mittens have a horizontal opening in the palm so that fingers can emerge and easily clutch tricky items, such as a latchkey or bus fare. For more prolonged adventures requiring manual dexterity, such as writing a

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A HAT, A KABUKI BRUSH, A PAIR OF SKATES, A FLASHLIGHT, A WHITE SILK CAMELLIA . . .

SAVORING the fruits of its own reputation, the House of Chanel has opened a shop at 5 East 57th Street. Most of us have by now been made aware of how the firm patiently waited almost a year for the previous occupant's lease to expire, so that the address might contain the magic number. "Chanel is more than fashion, it's a way of thinking," said Susan Jones, the store's manager, holding up in one hand a thirty-six-inch necklace of faux baroque pearls ($180) and in the other a twin-strand necklace heavy with rhinestone rondels and twinkly colored poured glass ($1,200). The necklaces are worn by the cognoscenti four, five, and six at a time, in the fashion of popcorn and cranberries strung round the Christmas tree. "It makes a statement," continued Miss Jones. "It says *Chanel*." On the table, a golden bracelet spelled it out (C-H-A-N-E-L) in inch-high letters. Stretched out nearby was a chain-link medallion belt, the medallions inscribed with Mlle. Chanel's profile, a cloverleaf, and a ladybug. In the works are animal motifs. ("Coco loved animals, nature. We're carrying out these themes to reflect that.") "It looks just like the store in Paris!" exclaimed a customer dressed head to toe in Chanel. Up and down the beige-carpeted stairway, like soigné chambermaids, women clad in black with snow-white collars smiled at mirrors, blushing happily. Assuredly, the clothes are lovely. The fabrics are of the very best quality, the familiar cut—box jacket with straight skirt—is impeccable, and the attention to detail is unwavering. To insure that a suit jacket falls correctly, the hem is weighted with a whisper of gold chain. Linings are hand-finished. The price for a wool day suit—the suit, like a Silver Cloud roadster, has the virtue of never going out of style—is from $1,500 to $2,500. Wool-jersey Madeline dresses, also for daytime activities, such as feeding the pigeons in the Bois de Boulogne, are from $1,400 to $2,000. Silk pumps made alluring with rhinestones are $625, and napa-leather moccasins, for lounging around in Saint-Tropez, are $360. The quintessential quilted-leather Chanel bag swinging from its gold-link chain starts at $350, for a petite five inches by seven, in napa leather; the classic, eight-by-ten envelope is $670, and the discomfiture of madly searching around in the tangled contents of one's bag for a lipstick is eliminated by an interior lipstick-size pocket. The bag also has a pocket specially constructed to garage Chanel's luxury compact, which is $75 at the first-floor cosmetics counter. Here also is dusting powder, considerately pressed rather than loose, so it doesn't fly around everywhere; the scent is No. 5, and the price is $45. Chanel's new Lift Serum, which perhaps might not top one's list of Christmas presents but is something a woman might like to buy for herself, anticipating the rigors of the holiday, supposedly not only is preventive but smooths out existing wrinkles—up to forty-five per cent. One fluid ounce, costing $50, lasts four to six weeks if used daily, and, Susan Jones cautions, "you have to keep it up." A touch of white near the face, flattering at any age, is provided

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by ingénue white silk pin-on camellias, for bodice or hair, $110 each. No doubt dictionaries in the next century will include, along with the "Five Blessings" (long life, wealth, tranquillity, love of virtue, and a peaceful end) and "five-fingered Jack" (the common cinquefoil), the entry "Five, No., *n.* Perfume." The price of an ounce of Chanel No. 5 perfume is $165, as is that for an ounce of No. 19 or No. 22. The cost of an ounce of Coco, the scent introduced last year by Chanel, which is a somewhat lighter, woodsy blend, is $190. No perfume is manufactured for Cristalle; the price for two fluid ounces of Cristalle cologne is $23.50.

Bidding adieu to Chanel's perfumed environs, we headed east on Fifty-seventh, and, not without casting a longing look at Maud Frizon, home of shoes *extraordinaire*, turned left onto Park Avenue and arrived at No. 454 (58th), the salon of Linda Dresner, now serenely finishing its second year. On view here is a dress that, like the vestments at Chanel, transcends the havoc of fashion and resides in that elevated realm where form and function, like two fond, wry old lovers, meet. The dress, by Chloé, is of black wool flannel; the top, long-sleeved and close-fitting, is single-breasted to the waist, and from there, mercurial, the dress descends to just above the ankle in perfect pleats, but it opens all down the front. Two half belts, in the same black wool, are fastened to the bodice, one above the other, on each side of the waist; they cross in back, and the dress, which has an aura of austere simplicity and assurance not often found in contemporary clothes, might have been worn with no trouble to her spirit by Dorothea Brooke, from her headstrong youth to her meeting with Ladislaw under the trees. The dress can also do service as a coat; it comes with matching front-pleated trousers, and the price for both is $1,700. Some gold silk lamé here has also been treated by Chloé's well-wielded needle. The result is an evening blouse with a molten tuxedo front and minute pearl buttons down the back; $870. In his Milanese workroom, Romeo Gigli designs wearable, fluid clothes for a roster of Trecento angels. Attendant here is a single Giotto-blue brushstroke of elongated cashmere; the price is $450. Also at Linda Dresner are separates by David Cameron, lately of California. A wool miniskirt is $240, a contoured wool hooded T-shirt is $215, and the ensemble is dyed the

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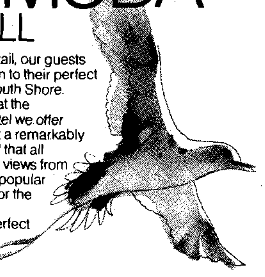

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We have heard tell of a woman who, some time after a youth of imaginable flux, passed by À la Vieille Russie and saw her mother's jewels displayed in the window. Inside the shop, at 781 Fifth Avenue (59th), diagonally across from the Plaza, is a necklace of nine cameos, each carved with a different classical portrait. There is Mercury, wearing a winged helmet; Zeus, accompanied by a lightning bolt; Diana, with crescent moon and stars kissing her temple. The cameos are set in gold and bound to each other with thin gold chains, and there are matching teardrop earrings carved with naiads; the set, made in Italy circa 1820, is $3,600. Left over from the days of Fabergé is a backgammon set in which the tokens are molded of semiprecious nephrite and rhodonite rather than of wood. (The colors are shagreen and rose.) Nestled in pearl-gray velvet within its original silk-lidded box, the set costs $22,000. The store also has some Fabergé brooches, and one golden Fabergé hatpin topped with a cabochon sapphire, for $3,500, to keep one's toque from allying itself with any passing breeze.

Out in the frosty afternoon, we hurried east again, burrowing through the construction tunnels (soon it will be possible to traverse the entire city, aboveground, without seeing the sun), and emerged into the bustle of Lexington Avenue, where outfits to be worn while one is embarked on the adult version of building better bones and teeth can be found at Capezio. Capezio East, 136 East 61st Street, has expanded its corps de ballet of tights and leotards into upbeat outfits for all sorts of heart-accelerating activities. Lining the walls are sleek nylon and cotton garments that bare the midriff, wrap the hips, hug the legs, and speed the feet. The price range is from $10 to $100, and the items include (1) a pair of diaphanous sugar-plum-pink nylon warmup pants, $24; (2) a sleeveless black leotard glittering with gold triangles and castanet dots, $24; and (3) a nylon unitard, in a choice of electric blue, fire-engine red, white, or black ($33).

In less frenetic moments, state-of-the-art bodies might enjoy being robed in a creation from Julie:Artisans' Gallery, 687 Madison Avenue (62nd). Almost every piece exhibited here is one of a kind, and each leads a double life as clothing and artifact of

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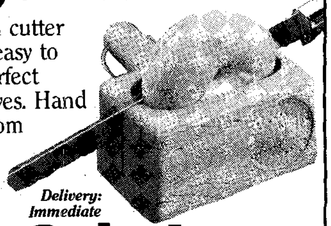

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independent beauty. After being dyed, the silk of Ana Lisa Hedstrom's tunics is manipulated into bundles, intricately stitched, and then loosed. "In the shadow of the pleats, the silk has a memory," Julie Dale says, showing us bird-footprint markings on a shimmer of blue-and-violet silk. Finished, the tunics sway softly; the prices are from $600 to $900, and there are also skirts, from $200 to $250. Hand-woven chimerical scarves of silk, with cotton, linen, and mohair added for texture, by Randall Darwall, are studies in color progression. The collection includes mufflers and shawls, and the price range is from $98 to $450. Hand-knitted wool scarves by Linda Mendelson change color at their crocheted ruffled edges, like orchid petals; they are $200 each, and Miss Mendelson will accept commissions for coats or jackets based on lines of poetry. On hand when we visited the gallery was a black smock coat inspired by Emily Dickinson. It was strung with an intarsia spiderweb, and knit into its hem was "The spider as an artist has never been employed though his surprising merit is freely certified." Smiling to ourself, we recite the price: $1,950.

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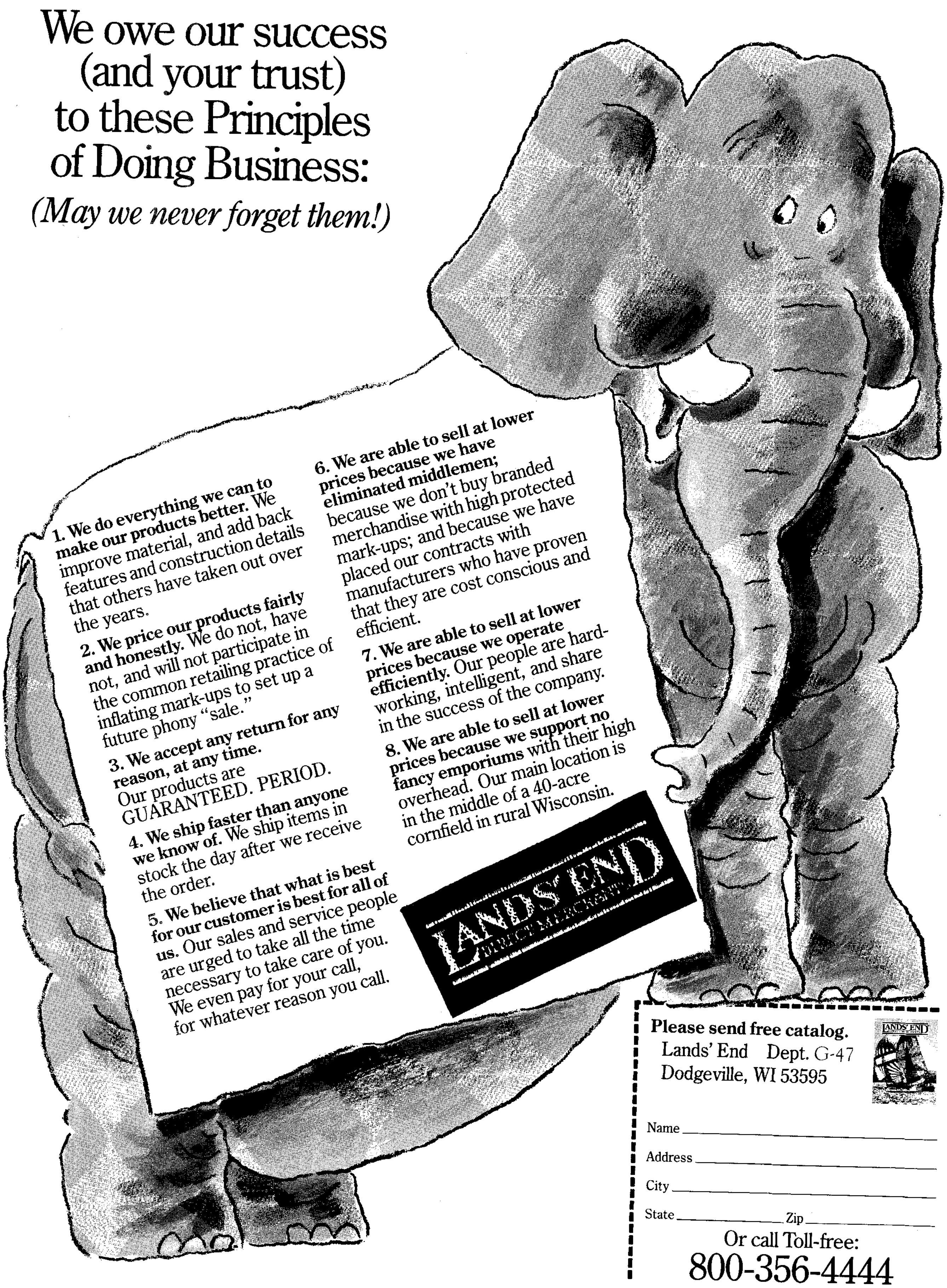
A HAT, A KABUKI BRUSH, A PAIR OF SKATES, A FLASHLIGHT, A WHITE SILK CAMELLIA, A PINCUSHION . . .

MR. RALPH LAUREN, our contemporary Jay Gatsby, has gone to a lot of trouble to turn the interior of the Rhinelander mansion, at 857 Madison Avenue (72nd), into an impersonation of an English country house where there just happens to be an estate sale going on, with a price tag on everything, from the clothes in the closet to the child's rocking chair. In the Collection Room, on the third floor, where fantasy life comes to full flower, silver frames—enclosing black-and-white snapshots of Lauren models busy wearing Lauren clothes and acting out equinocentric Lauren hobbies—are ranged on a mahogany table next to a stack of carefully chosen and well-thumbed books: "Famous World Paintings," edited by Rockwell Kent, and "Oriental Carpets," subtitled, in gold letters on the binding, under a pig crest, "And Some Jacquard Reproductions." "The people here really do try to be as ingratiating as possible," said a young salesman, reverentially holding up for our examination a panné-velvet skirt with an all-over pattern of aquamarine-red-and-gold paisley, each central orb shining like a jewel. In line with Mr. Lauren's portmanteau style, the skirt might be paired with a tobacco herringbone wool jacket and an ivory silk shirt dipping at the throat like a thirsty calla lily. The prices are $698 for the skirt, $478 for the jacket, and $258 for the blouse. Here, too, is a soon-to-be-a-major-motion-picture snow-white hooded cashmere coat, which would be ideally worn for a remake of the last scene of Ken Russell's "Women in Love;" the price is $1,358, to which the giver might add an allowance for dry cleaning. Leaving the couture end of the business, we headed through Classics and spotted a mannequin hailing us across the great distance between the Collection Room and Roughwear—about two hours from New York City, depending on traffic—wrapped in a Pocahontas sweater for a day in the great outdoors. The sweater, which reaches to midcalf, is hand-knitted with a hearty design of red and blue wampum; the price is $445. One of the central themes of fantasy, and of television shows such as "The Twilight Zone," is that inanimate objects have secret active lives. At Polo, filled with the chatter of well-dressed, polite Princeton-senior types who have secret lives as security guards, old hats and jackets, stained by imaginary rain, droop from stout wooden pegs along the walls, seeming to sag happily with the weight of past challenges met: the day the fishing cap pulled in that trout; or the midsummer morning the butterfly net tore chasing the purple emperor. Leaving the wilds of Roughwear, we waved to a Doris Day ribbed turtleneck sweater with an outgoing primary-color stripe and a big cowl hood ($138, in Activewear), and headed down the beige-carpeted stairs to the main floor (the deep-green-felt-covered walls of the stairwell are hung with an art collection acquired specifically for this demesne, which includes a nineteenth-century print showing a pack of lost, mournful hounds and called "Lost Among the Timber"), where amid some appealing items at the "antiquities" counter is a Victorian bronze-based pincushion. Shaped like a Thumbelina-size court shoe, it costs $85, and might accommodate any of the counter's selection of stickpins, a few of which glint with portraits of pheasants or their enemy hounds; the price range is from $100 to $600. Here, too, is a turn-of-the-century eight-piece ivory



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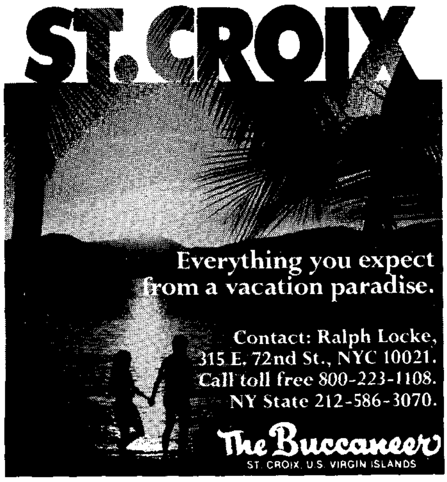

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vanity set. And, lastly, on the day of our visit, there was a prewar tortoiseshell compact. One and a half inches square, it fit nicely into the palm of one's hand; one reached the powder by opening the compact and pulling on a bit of green silk ribbon. There it was, the dust of the past, with its own puff and tiny mirror; when the ribbon was pulled again, the powder disappeared like a Murphy bed.

Up the River Alph from Mr. Lauren's Xanadu is the Tambaran Gallery, at 957 Madison Avenue (75th), a storeroom of festive and everyday jewels and artifacts from the South Pacific, Africa, India, Afghanistan, Australia, and Indonesia. At this point on our journey, it might be a good idea to pick up a waistband from New Guinea, covered completely with more than a thousand stitched-on baby-cowrie shells. The shells were used for money; the price in cash is $600. Here, too, is a selection of ivory bracelets from India and Africa. The Indian bracelets are from $50 to $250. The African bracelets, because of the palm oil worn on the arms of their original owners, have changed from an ivory color to a range of warm, lucent shades that look like different types of stained resinous wood. The African bracelets are from $100 to $300; and, from Nagaland, and in a bronze hue, is a bracelet made from two hunting horns twisted together, and priced at $400.

Wittenborn Art Books, on the second floor at 1018 Madison Avenue (78th)—which also houses, on consecutive higher floors, the Saidenberg, Rachel Adler, and Forum Galleries—has among its bibliographic treasures three volumes that we mention to give an idea of the shop's scope. For those who would like to re-create, down by the duck pond in their own park, a Japanese teahouse, Wittenborn can provide a two-volume set imported from Japan titled "Cubic Patterns of Japanese Tea Rooms." Each volume is given over to fifteen pop-up architectural scale models of different existing tea rooms, including specifications for the correct contours and for the correct placement of stones and rocks. The models, flattened, could be framed. The volumes measure fourteen by eighteen inches; they close with an ivory fastening; and there is an explanatory booklet in Japanese. The set is $1,500. Also from the printing houses of Japan, but in English as well as Japanese, is a lavish book cataloguing the collection of British textile designs

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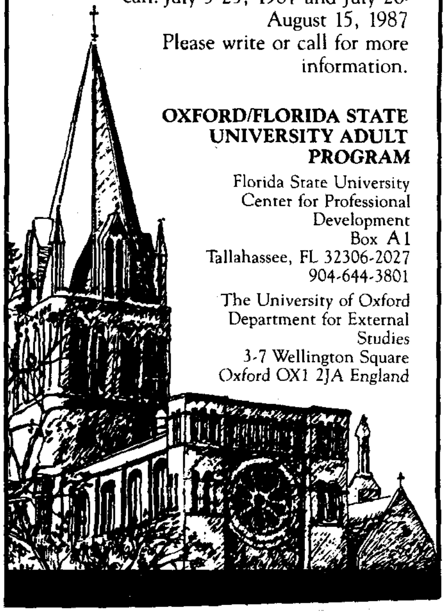

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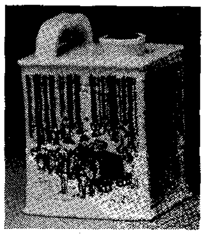

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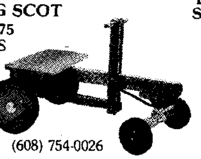

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in the Victoria and Albert Museum (Gakken, Tokyo; $375). Predating Art Nouveau, mid-eighteenth-century castles sprout briars, roses, and amber leaves. And, thirdly, here is a book called "The Diaries and Letters of Kaethe Kollwitz," edited by her son, Hans Kollwitz, published by the Henry Regnery Company, of Chicago, in 1955. One entry says, of a newly mounted show, "I have never done any work cold, except for a few trivial things which I am not showing here. I have always worked with my blood, so to speak. Those who see these things must feel that." The book is $45.

A few blocks farther uptown, at Sweet Nellie, 1262 Madison Avenue (90th), are original Victorian watercolors of herbs and flowers that impart the rejuvenating breath of the possibilities of springtime. The charm of these botanical renderings lies in their only partial coloration, as if the leaves were, as we watched, unfurling green thoughts in a green shade. The specimens include alchemilla, potamogeton, and fraxinus; $125 to $165. From the kiln of Liz Lawrence, who lives and works in West Hurley, New York, comes earthenware pottery hand-painted with Victorian domestic scenes. Mugs are $18.50, and are decorated with open grand pianos or, on one, a table covered with a checkered cloth and ringed with waiting empty chairs. And for those who persist in thinking that an egg is properly a modest thing, here are ceramic ones, from the Grey Willow Pottery, in Wheaton, Illinois, painted with traditional Ukrainian designs, at $14 each. To the delight of her fans, Janet Russo, who has long had a store on Nantucket, has opened a cozy shop three doors up from Sweet Nellie, at 1270 Madison Avenue (91st), and revelling here are what, in the days when there was a honed distinction between school shoes and party shoes, were called party clothes. For Dalton girls and their mums, here are flat-heeled "Nutcracker" slippers in bonbon pink, white, and black. They are embroidered with snowdrop pearls, rosettes, or glittery showers. The prices, dependent on the array of furbelows, range from $75 to $86. An Odile black grosgrain belt is two and a half inches wide. The buckle is a serpentine black braid spiral, and the braid is outlined by a snaking coil of black jet; $70. Here, too, are enough dressy sweaters to fill a hope chest, hand-knitted in an all-over design of Newport seashells. The shells are outlined with seed pearls. In a camel-hair-and-wool blend, the colors are cream, licorice, pussy willow, and dusty rose; the price is $350.

•

A HAT, A KABUKI BRUSH, A PAIR OF SKATES, A FLASHLIGHT, A WHITE SILK CAMELLIA, A PINCUSHION, A WORTH GOWN . . .

AFTER trudging south and west to the Metropolitan Museum (a membership here is $60 for an individual, and $100 for two) to pick up some wrapping paper, so that our gifts would be saved from facing the world without the imprimatur of design—the choice includes William Morris patterns and cheerful prints by Raoul Dufy, $14.95 for sixteen eighteen-and-three-quarter-by-twenty-seven-inch sheets—we knocked on the blue door of the house that Jenny Bell Whyte, who makes dresses of antique textiles, shares with her husband, the writer and conservationist William H. Whyte. Mrs. Whyte uses anything she thinks is beautiful and worth saving; the fabrics

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that she turns into dresses are, for the most part, from garments that have already been pulled apart or damaged, and are thus not suitable for museum display. New black silk velvet is spliced with nineteenth-century Russian silver brocade in an Alhambresque dress; an ivory Emma Woodhouse silk ball gown has an underskirt pieced together from a late-eighteenth-century Spitalfields silk shawl; a jade silk voided-velvet breadth that may once have belonged to the Maharani of Jaipur, the first Indian to have sari material made in Paris, has become a day dress. "We'll never see textiles like this again—never, never, never," said Mrs. Whyte. "To go out and pick the berries for dyes—never." Recently, Mrs. Whyte repaired a Worth ball dress for a young woman whose grandmother had had it made to wear to the coronation of Edward VII. The bodice was all that was left, and it was matched with the skirt of a Worth gown found in an attic and believed to have belonged to the young woman's great-aunt. The dresses, all of which are custom-fitted, start at $1,200. To make an appointment with Mrs. Whyte, telephone 369-0014.

After a swift taxi ride through the Park, we pulled up in the frontier region of the upper West Side, a neighborhood served by the post office's Planetarium Station, where, almost weekly, new settlers arrive, beckoned by the bright lights of the Columbus Avenue landing strip. Liberty House, at 2389 Broadway (88th), is like a lone flag, planted long ago, representing a country of good sense, friendliness, and moderation. Here are homespun Willa Cather cotton flannel dresses by a company called Worlds Apart. The dresses have easy dolman sleeves, dropped waists, and hems that graze the ankles; prints include a blue-sky-and-cornfields-colored plaid. They are $69. Olive-green, gray, black, or sunflower-yellow cotton leggings, provided by a firm called Department of Peace, are $16, and a black chiffon scarf, five feet long and scattered with sequinned stars, is $28. Stud earrings for pierced ears start at $5 a pair (the price for red jasper), and for women with an uneven number of holes in their earlobes—three in one and five in the other, for instance—the store will sell single earrings. Sterling-silver ear cuffs are $7, and, from China, here are full-sized oiled-rice-paper umbrellas. On one we opened, a crane in flight hungrily eyed a persimmon moon. The umbrellas keep the rain off, carry the

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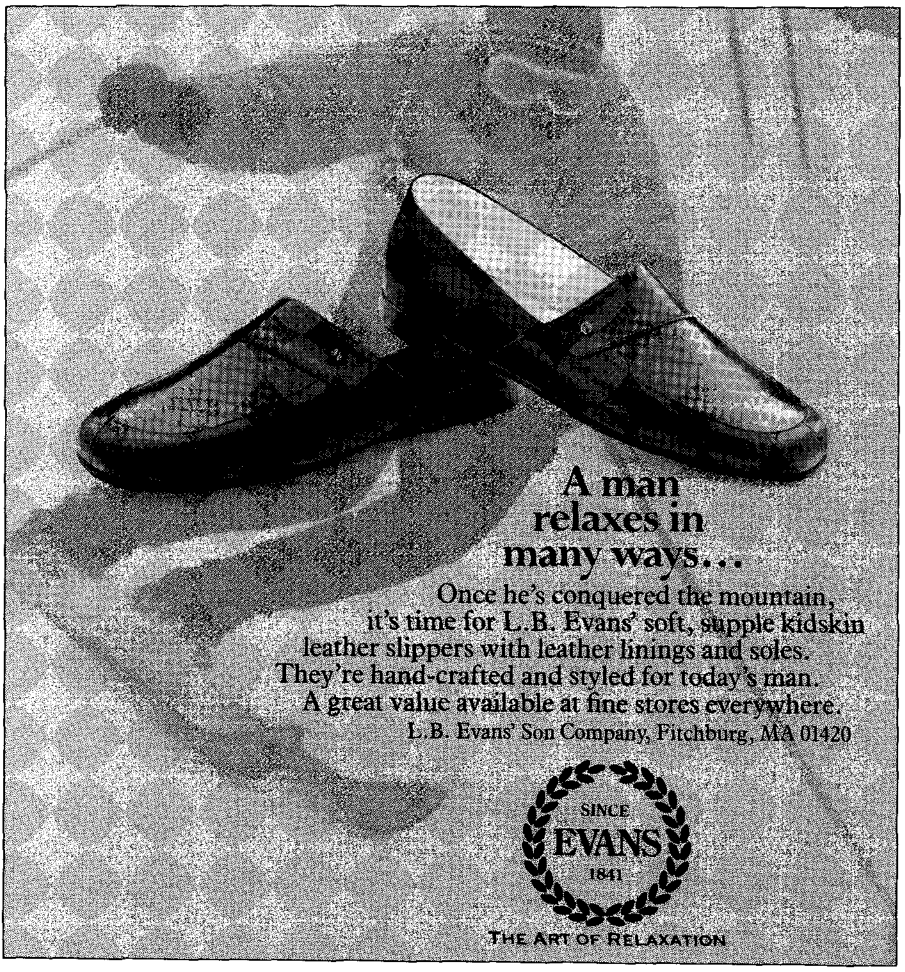
affordable price tag of $8, and function as a sort of adaptable Zen koan, for, with the handles cut off, they make admirable lampshades.

Dodging the legion of strollers that crowd the sidewalks of this busy settlement, we entered the territory of Surroundings, at 2295 Broadway (83rd), a flower-and-plant shop that, this year, has organically expanded to house, in an upstairs loft, vintage kimonos. Most of the kimonos are from Kyoto, and the selection includes full-length examples of the Ikat weave, in which the cotton or silk threads have been dyed in different colors along their lengths, and the resulting pattern is exactly calculated; and short silk Haoris, a number of them with the bright chrysanthemums that mean long life. The kimonos range from $50 to $500, and here, too, are some cotton jackets traditionally worn by Japanese workers. They are dark blue, wear like denim, and are adorned with gray and brown Japanese characters; we were told that on one, made for a worker at a Zen monastery, the front read "Guard the Mountain" and the back simply "Guard." The price is $50. Purists favor beeswax candles, because, in addition to being slow-burning and fragrant, they are virtuously nonchemical and throw off a clear halo. Downstairs at Surroundings, a box of a dozen twelve-inch candles is $30, and, for dark nights when all the lights go out with a *whoosh*, there are two squat six-inch beeswax hurricane candles, for $12.

Taper in hand, and our steps guided by Polaris glimmering faintly in the north, we turned onto 82nd Street, crossed Amsterdam Avenue (where, as on an Advent calendar, every day a new shop opens and a window shines), and arrived, wide-eyed, at Salou, 452A Columbus Avenue (82nd). Here (the store's name is the Cherokee word for a corn tassel) are dried flowers that seem to have found their true calling in the afterlife. Dried, the enchanting last roses of summer are $2; tea and rambler roses, with more blooms per stem, are $4 each. For indoor kitchen gardeners, Salou can supply potted basil, rosemary, thyme, sage, and parsley in natural or topiary shapes; they are $15 and $35, respectively, and will, with attention, survive the winter. A pot of scented geraniums is $35, and for a beribboned sprig of freshly cut mistletoe from South Carolina leafy enough to shield the amorous the price is $25.

Thinking of kisses past and present,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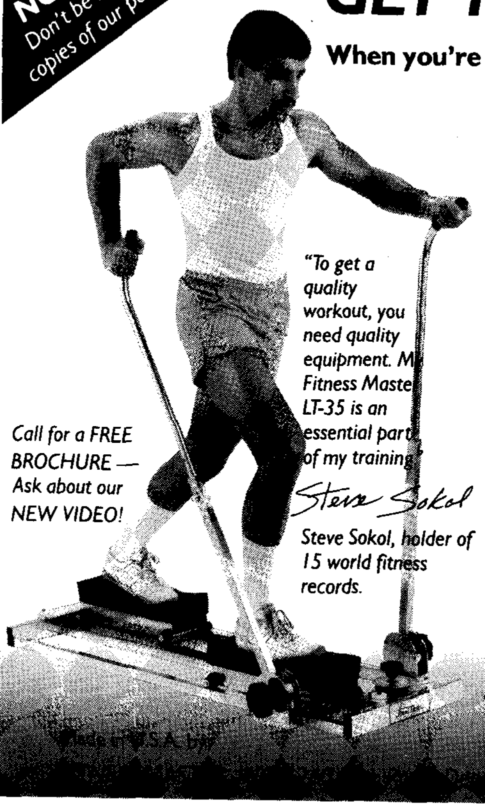
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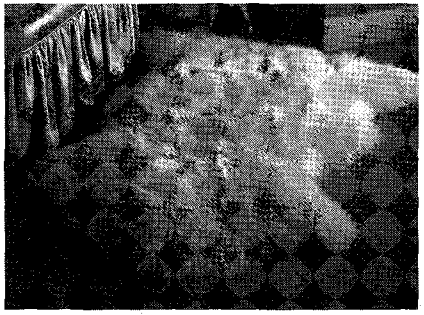

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we waited for our vision, glazed over with sentimental tears, to clear, and, after looking both ways, crossed the street. Peering into the lofty, lit-up spaces at Charivari Workshop, 441 Columbus Avenue (81st), we found that to coördinate with his fall collection the Japanese designer Yohji Yamamoto has designed an unusual pair of eyeglasses. The round frames are heavy black plastic, and the lenses are an almost opaque black. The price per pair is $95. For Pollyannas, Cutler & Gross, shading their eyes as they gaze west across the Atlantic from England, can provide rose-tinted lenses in clear round frames for $75, or a folding faux-tortoiseshell Edith Sitwell lorgnette that is sure to amuse anyone who would like to have it, and costs $45. We begin our tour of the Weiser family's Starship Enterprise with a look at a knee-length double-breasted wool jacket by the English designer Joe Casely-Hayford. The style is neo-Savile Row, and in back, below a superbly fitted waist, is an origami-like inset of asymmetrical folds. The folds are of the same wool, and serve to transform traditional menswear fabric into a substance capable of mystery. The jacket is $515, and a matching ankle-length skirt, with a front inset of the same deeply satisfying folds, is $220. Also here from England is a bone silk shirt, its tab decorated with a lipstick-red appliqué of lederhosen roses. The shirt, by Workers for Freedom, is $265. Jean-Paul Gaultier, from France, prefers, this year, to write out his name in Cyrillic, and so it appears on the neckband of a Lieutenant Uhura space-suit top. Of heavy black cotton, the blouse has black-and-plum horizontal striping on its close-fitting sleeves, thick vertical gray and purple stripes on the back, and a silver zipper along one shoulder, for beaming in and out. The price is $270. Downstairs in the hold are the designs of Mr. Yamamoto, of the black glasses. Like a pale bride in a sea of black frock coats, loose trousers, and waistcoats is a lovely two-tiered accordion-pleated skirt in cream-colored light wool: a knee-length circle of accordion pleats is layered over a longer skirt that falls to the ankles in a triumphant dance of matching accordion pleats. The price is $285. Otherworldly six-foot-long silk chiffon cocoon scarves, in nightshade purple or chrysalis white, are $145 each.

•

A hat, a Kabuki brush, a pair of skates, a flashlight, a white silk camellia, a pincushion, a Worth gown, and a fistful of stars.

HEAD wrapped against the wind now coming up from the river, we headed south to Mythology, at 370 Columbus Avenue (78th), and picked up a few copies of "In Advance of the Landing: Folk Concepts of Outerspace," by Douglas Curran, with a foreword by Tom Wolfe (Abbeville Press; $16.95), to be handed out to those women we know who climb onto their rooftops at night and, watching the lights of the newly built Montana and New West apartment buildings blink on and off, call the names of other Western places into the darkness: Ransom Canyon, Wolf Point, Early, Notrees. The book is a series of interviews with people who await—or, in some cases, believe they've experienced—extraterrestrial visitors; Betty Andreasson, of Cheshire, Connecticut, for instance, has constructed fibre-glass replicas of the aliens who abducted her onto a spacecraft in 1967. To be studiously filled in by those who are, to their surprise, always seated at the grownups' table for Christmas dinner is a coloring book called "What's Wrong with This Picture?" (Dover; $2.50). The line drawings are by Anna Pomaska, and one caption reads "Mrs. Muffin Has Just Come Out of the Bakery. . . . Can You Discover 9 Unusual Things in This Picture?" (One is that her bag has no strap and is floating in midair below her hand.) Rubber stamps with wooden handles, if they are used with the proper ink, will transfer images onto any kind of paper; motifs include rolling pins, unicorns, the Mad Hatter, and a dirigible with a banner that reads "Good Work." They cost from $1.95 to $8.50 each; the ink pads are from $3 to $4.50. For those who are without a view of the night sky, or who, if they had their druthers, would sleep every night under the stars, Mythology can provide Friendly Stars That Glow, an envelope containing a hundred and twenty-five luminous star decals, to be planted—either freely or according to the enclosed star chart—on the ceiling; $2. A few wayward stars might also twinkle on wrapped presents, before the lights on the tree are lit, and there, fixed on a tiny wishful gleam, we take our leave, and, latching our grandmother's now filled trunk, mark it "Not to Be Opened Until Christmas."

THE CHILDREN'S CLOSET

SIX scalloped rows of embroidered Swiss cotton wedded by airy hand-hemstitching; a skirt of Belgian princess lace floating, like a contented sigh, over an underskirt of Belgian linen: "A Russian grandmother with American grandchildren, it's a riot all the time," says Luba Elianoff, whose legendary embroidered linens have served as a North Star of quality and good taste for almost forty years. Mrs. Elianoff, who supplied the layette for a great-grandchild of Winston Churchill and the bed linens for the airplane of Pope Paul I, will also provide some lucky infant with a christening robe. The robes, including the lace and Swiss hand-loomed embroideries, are designed by Mrs. Elianoff herself. A doting grandmother possessed of a large heart might also pick up, for the new baby's sister, a puff-sleeved dress that Mrs. Elianoff calls the One Candle Birthday Outfit. Of white cotton trimmed with two circlets of white and red rickrack, it would do equally well for a first Christmas morning, and the price is a modest $40. The christening robes range from $300 to $600; handmade christening caps, beaded with satin ribbon, are $80, and silk-foulard-lined bootees swaddled in princess lace are $86 a pair. The collection is available through Cerutti, 807 Madison Avenue (68th), and Maison Henri, 42 East 59th Street.

Part of the excitement of Christmas is splendid things to eat, and someone very small might be cajoled into admiring just how nice plum pudding looks in situ, rather than on the floor, if a portion showed up in his or her very own bowl. At Judy Corman, 198 Columbus Avenue (69th), a mug, bowl, and plate set hand-painted with Christmas artifacts—beribboned presents, tinsel-draped tree—can have the child's name inscribed on it. The set can go in the dishwasher, the price is $30, and Mrs. Corman requests at least three weeks' notice. Though barnyard animals remain staple motifs for infant wear, for a child not bred to the farm life a suitable moment to learn how to say "squirrel" often arises before a natural opportunity to

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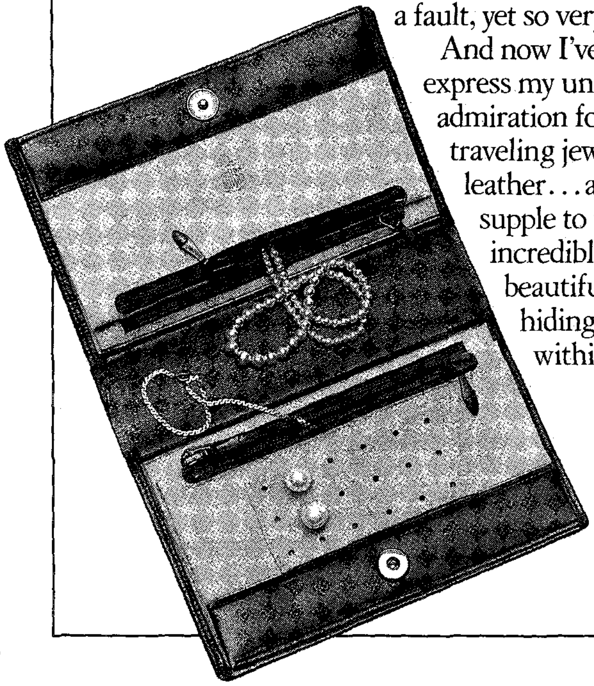

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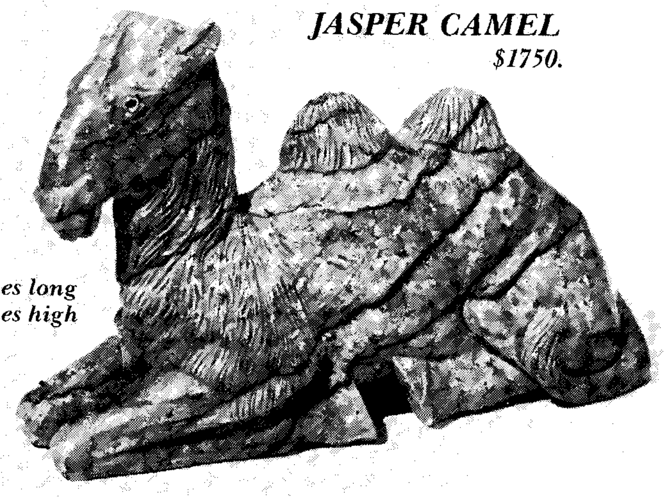

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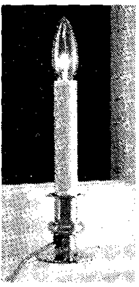

We never liked those plastic electric candles for holiday windows. They topple over at the slightest vibration and look less than elegant. These, standing 9" tall with bulb (included), are solid brass electric candles that tastefully light up your home with a festive holiday glow. And, they don't topple over! Each has 5' cord with in-line switch. $5.95 each. *SPECIAL:* Set of 4, $20.00. Set of 8, $36.00 *postpaid.*

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work in cows and pigs. Tiffany, always alert to the needs of big and small urbanites, can supply a learning aid: the Tiffany Squirrel English earthenware set—plate, porringer, and mug—and, for young movers and shakers, a sterling-silver squirrel rattle whose tail doubles as a teething ring. They are $40 and $175, respectively. Provident aunts and uncles are great dispensers of cotton bibs, and a particularly sturdy one, printed with a well-adjusted child's drawing of a house (doors, windows, and front walk all accounted for), can be tracked down at R. G. Crumbsnatcher, 254 Columbus Avenue (72nd). It's trimmed with green rickrack grass, and the price is $14. For odd moments during the holiday festivities when the new baby is not center stage, an ingenious lightweight, hundred-per-cent-cotton-terry-cloth playsuit easily converts, with the help of snaps, into a sleep sack. White with salmon-pink piping, it sports a blue appliqué of topsy-turvy blocks numbered 1-2-3, and is to be had at Fusen Usagi, 927 Madison Avenue (74th), for $33. Babies whose head-spinning agendas this Christmas include a certain amount of time fussing around in car seats would be well suited in a Synchilla-pile bunting ordered from the company called Patagonia (Patagonia Mail Order, P.O. Box 86, Ventura, Calif. 93002). Two chin-to-knee zippers make getting in and out easy, there is a leg division, and since infants usually have little need to write memos in transit, the bunting has built-in mittens. The color is turquoise; $33. Happily following the Candyland trail of clear bright colors in clothes for very young children, we arrived at Agnes B., 116 Prince Street, where, on a pair of circus-striped leggings, baby pastels are forsaken in favor of their strong-minded cousins fuchsia and Shocking pink. Sizes are 1 to 12, and the leggings require an outlay of from $27 to $42; for little woodsmen and women, Peanutbutter & Jane, 617 Hudson Street (Jane), will cheerfully hand over a nonsoporific infant-size red cotton-knit union suit. It has snap-up legs and the requisite trapdoor seat, and the price is $25.

SINCE we last peered into the wilds of the children's closet, Cricket Hosiery, a gifted firm with a seemingly tireless imagination, has dreamed up dozens of designs for practical non-skid socks. Toddlers whose elder brothers and sisters had to put up with

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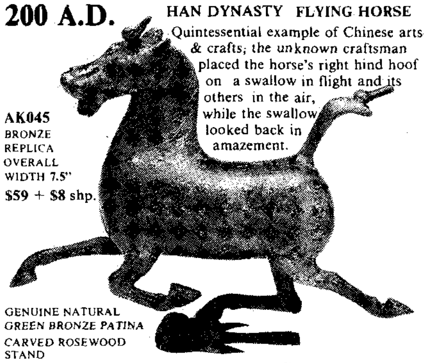

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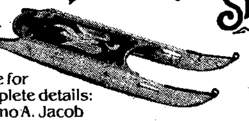

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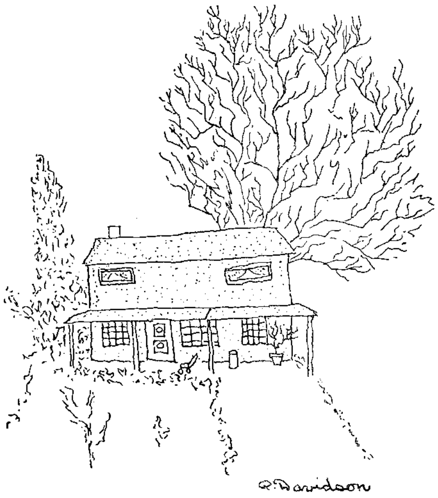
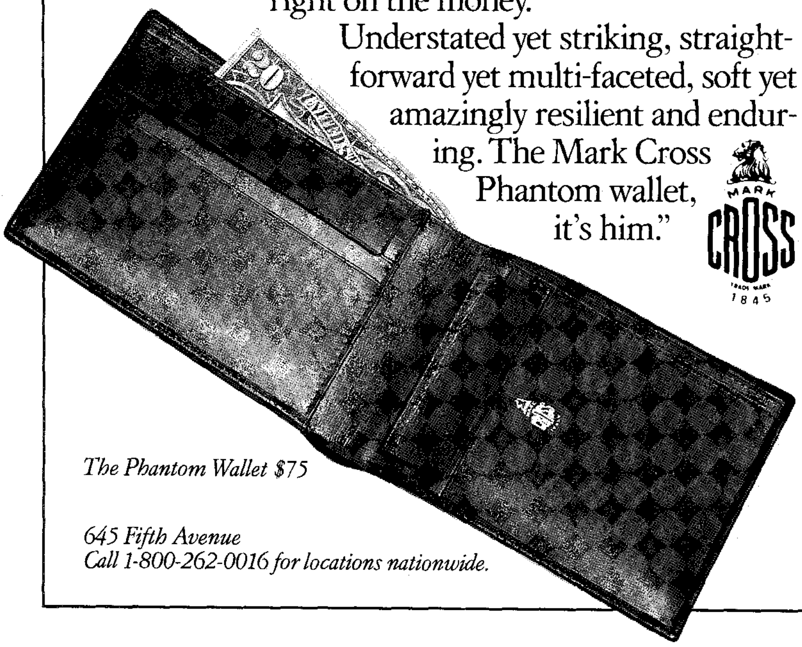
a certain number of doomed glissades can pursue their shoeless explorations in socks illustrated with the likes of sea urchins, preening parrots, or a Brooklyn street scene. On the soles, the raised non-skid patches are an unfinished game of ticktacktoe. The socks, in a wide range of sizes, are $5 a pair at Kids, Kids, Kids, 436 Sixth Avenue (9th). After a dampish day spent rooting around among the mucky pleasures of the garden, a little boy or girl might be persuaded to come in for supper and exchange muddy sneakers for a pair of Peter Rabbit slippers, by Beatrix Potter Footwear, which have made their way here from England. Peter Rabbit's torso, snug in a blue felt jerkin with round yellow buttons, makes up the slipper's toe; the child wriggles his or her foot in behind the famous floppy ears. The slippers are $22, in sizes 2 to 6, at Peanutbutter & Jane, which also has green rubber frog boots, for really rainy days, that rival John's Great Big Waterproof Ones. They have two bulging frog eyes and a froggy smile where the toe meets the sole, and the uppers are green nylon shells that pull closed with a yellow drawstring; by Parigi, and $25, in sizes 2 to 8. For the same price, Kids, Kids, Kids will relinquish any one of a number of lighthearted pinstriped pastel slickers, by Chicco, in sizes 2 to 5, which could easily top snowsuits on rainy days this winter and go it alone come spring. Matching umbrellas, which, opened on a gray day, cast a decorous sunny glow, are part of the deal, and, for when the rain turns to snow, R. G. Crumbsnatcher has laid in a supply of toddler-size hand-knitted mittens, extravagantly rainbow-striped. They come in sets of three, at $16, and each mitten is ambidextrous.

Not budging from our position that

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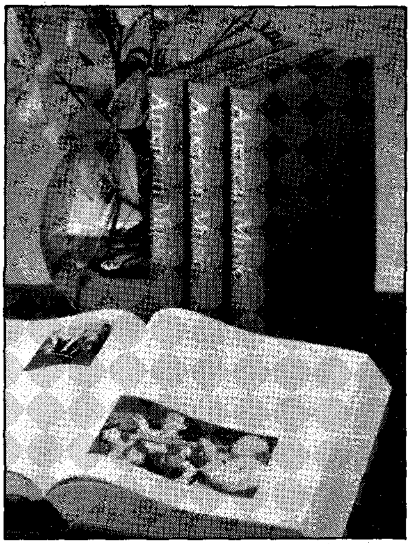

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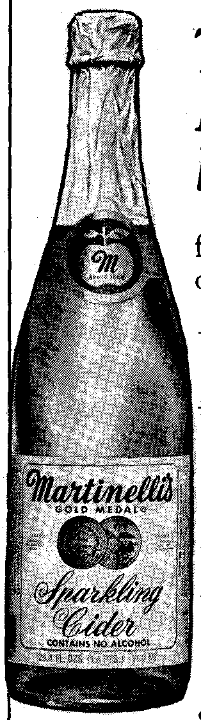
the only question a person not intimately connected to a five-year-old may ask without being indiscreet is whether or not he or she is having a good time, we nevertheless report on a few garments appropriate for going to school in, which we have tested only for comfort, durability, and all-around cheerfulness. A winter-defying pair of sunny-yellow acrylic tights scattered with pink tea roses and violet lupines is $12.50 at 012 Benetton, 1162 Madison Avenue (86th). Even with frequent machine washings, they're not supposed to run—a sterling quality ascribed also to some cozy acrylic-blend tights made by an English company called Country Kids. The colors are smoke blue, silver gray, ritzy red, blush pink, and French navy, and they are $8 a pair, in sizes 3-5 and 6-8, at Kids, Kids, Kids. Ribbed miniskirts of heavy wool at Benetton—colors include violet and azure—are $25; here, too, for $42, are blue and gold sweaters busy with fish, cats, mice, chickens, and rabbits, whose haywire outlines are reminiscent of Etch-a-Sketch attempts on long-ago Christmas afternoons. The youngest, smallest members of our species almost universally feel a devoted, if subtly patronizing, affection for memorabilia concerning gigantic extinct creatures. For dinosaur *apasionados*, Peanutbutter & Jane has a pile of primary-color long-sleeved T-shirts, by Flapdoodle, printed with caricatures of the triceratops, diplodocus, or stegosaurus; sizes 2 to 10, and $15 each. Sometime in the interval between the present moment and fifteen years ago—when last we cast our reportorial eye on Oshkosh trainmen's striped overalls (writing, "Oshkosh overalls, which one year ago were a kinky new costume for cultural revolutionaries, are already standard playground attire")—they have turned magenta, mauve, gold, teal, Kelly, orange, and sapphire blue, at least on the shelves of the now college-age shop The Chocolate Soup, 946 Madison (74th). For sizes 6 months to 8, they are $28. Patagonia, which safely made it over the parallel bars from the counterculture to the new age, has designed diamond-quilted cotton pullovers, with a middle layer of polyester. When the neck tab is snapped closed, the open collar becomes a turtleneck; the colors are cobalt blue or red, and the sizes are toddler size 3, and 4 to 14 ($23 for the smaller sizes, $26 for the larger). Not every size in every color. The person most often responsible for keeping



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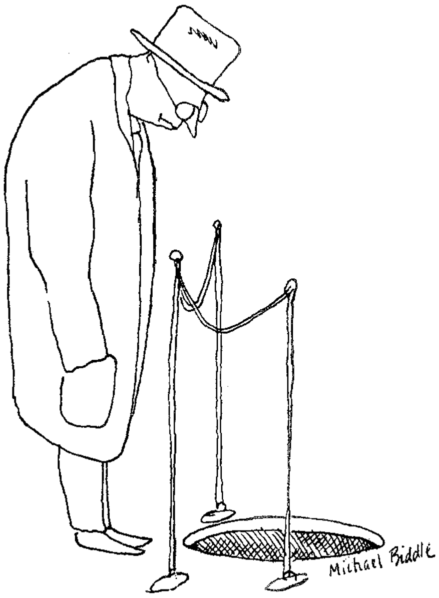
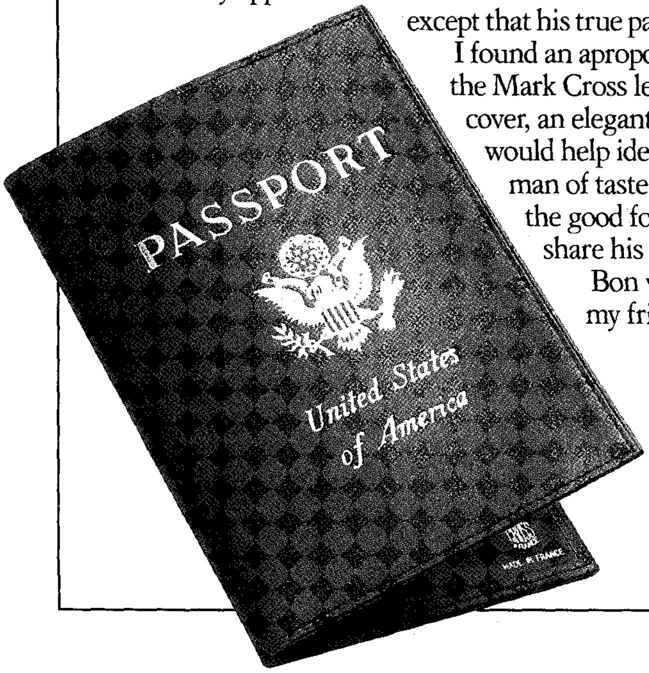
a child's clothes up to some tacitly agreed-on level of spiffiness might applaud—along with the recipient—a clear-plastic schoolroom smock, from Judy Corman's shop, that is festooned with pictures of nicely oozing tubes of red, blue, and green paint. It has a pocket and a name slot, and it hails from the workroom of Two's Company; $20.

The Gap, purveyor of sporting clothes for sensible grownups, has opened a department for children, at 1535 Third Avenue (86th), where it has on its shelves three miniature versions of the ever-popular denim jacket. Unlined denim ($32) should satisfy even the most robust city child, but for scions of those hardy folk who while away their weekends, or even their weeks, logging or tending either useful or ornamental sheep here are also jackets lined with lumberjack red plaid ($36) or with Sherpa pile ($42). The sizes are XXS to XL. A little girl might like to wear under her jacket an off-white wool sweater from The Chocolate Soup, hand-knitted in Uruguay, that is laden with cornucopias spilling pineapples and gourds. It is $128, in sizes 8, 10, and 12, and for her younger sibling there is a royal-blue football cardigan, also hand-knitted in Uruguay. On its front are a football and a megaphone, and on its back a whole football field and three cheerleaders; $119 to $157, in sizes 2 to 8. Twill pants at the Gap have elastic waistbands and tapered legs, and are $24, in sizes 4 to 12; and, to hold them up until the child's waist expands appropriately, colorful woven suspenders, from Guatemala, are $12 at Judy Corman.

This season, marabou is to fashion-





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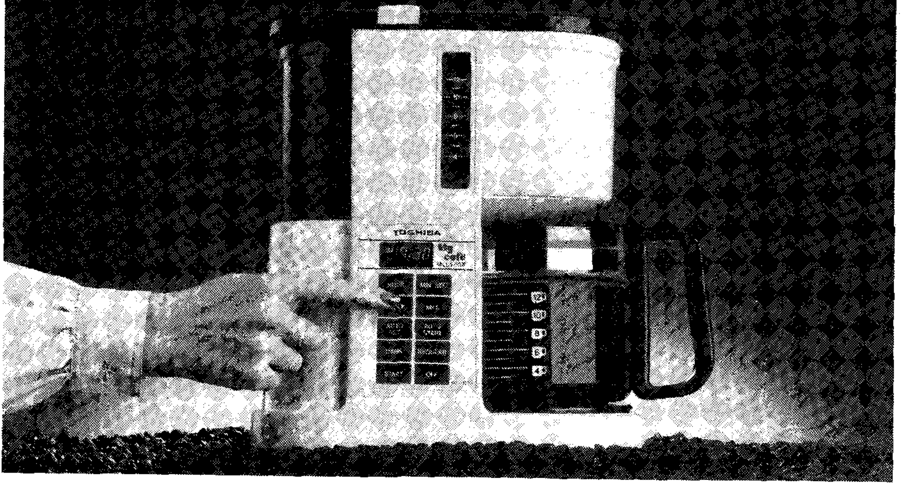

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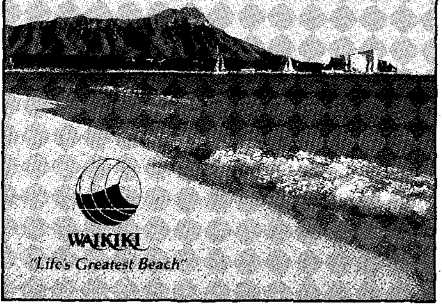

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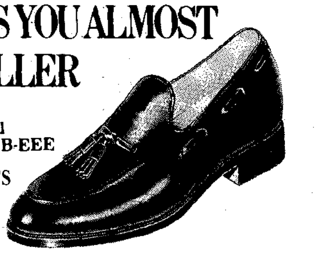

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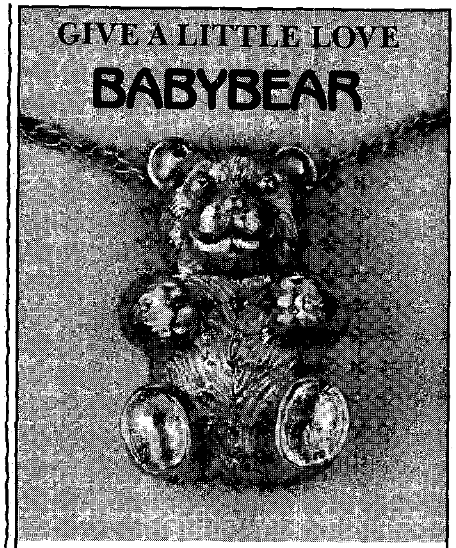
able-minded little girls what crocodile is to their mamas. Funny crocheted wool-and-acrylic cloche hats—with earflaps—that are trimmed with dyed marabou fetch $32 at Peanutbutter & Jane, and they can be made to order to match any outfit. Ancients who would prefer to leave marabou well enough alone but like to see children in hats might stop by Au Chat Botté, 903 Madison Avenue (72nd), and spring $25 for a red tartan tam-o'-shanter. Red tartan, a perennial favorite, also makes a respectable appearance on a pair of Tom Thumb-size machine-washable wool-blend trousers—by Imp Originals, and $20—at Judy Corman, and as the lining of a heffalump-hunting duffel coat. By the English firm of L. C., Ltd., in Newcastle, the coat, which could easily be handed down from a little boy to his sister, has wooden toggles, is at Petit Bateau Boutique, 930 Madison Avenue (74th), and costs $86, in toddler 3 and 4, and 4 to 8. Also present on the shop's orderly racks are intricately hand-smocked Liberty-type floral dresses by Pegeen, for $83. Dresses with simpler, though no less appealing, hand smocking, by a company called the Smockery, are from $35 to $45; and, to demurely keep long hair from flying around, Petit Bateau can provide, for $8, a pair of dancing-school barrettes, each set with a row of five iridescent plastic butterflies.

Au Chat Botté, keenly alert to the rampant Anglophilia let loose on these shores at the first rustle of a partridge in a pear tree, has tactfully laid in a supply of sailor suits that are reasonable, if slightly Parisian, facsimiles of the suit worn by Prince William in his role as page at his Uncle Andrew's wedding. A cream Viyella blouson, trimmed with navy grosgrain ribbon, destined to peek over the table at Christmas dinner, is accompanied by shipshape navy trousers, and the price is $150, in sizes infant to 8. Considering an outfit for the sailor's sister, aged five or so, we temporarily drop our ban on black clothes for children and report that the prettiest party dress around happens to be made of black rayon velvet. Designed by the California firm of Kate & Cheryl, the dress has an Empire waist and wraps closed in back by means of both a hook and a button, and the whole is set off by a four-inch-wide Degas pink satin bow. The cloister neckline has a sheer ruffle of white organza, the price is $120, for sizes 2 to 6x, and the



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hem is ample enough to be let down. And for a small boy who looks suspiciously as if his first words might be Thoreau's dictum about the dubious nature of enterprises that require new clothes, a blue romper is appliquéd with three eager-to-get-away stunt airplanes. It comes with a white shirt and, in toddler 2, 3, and 4, costs $42, at Petit Bateau; the planes are green, yellow, and stoplight red. Good night!

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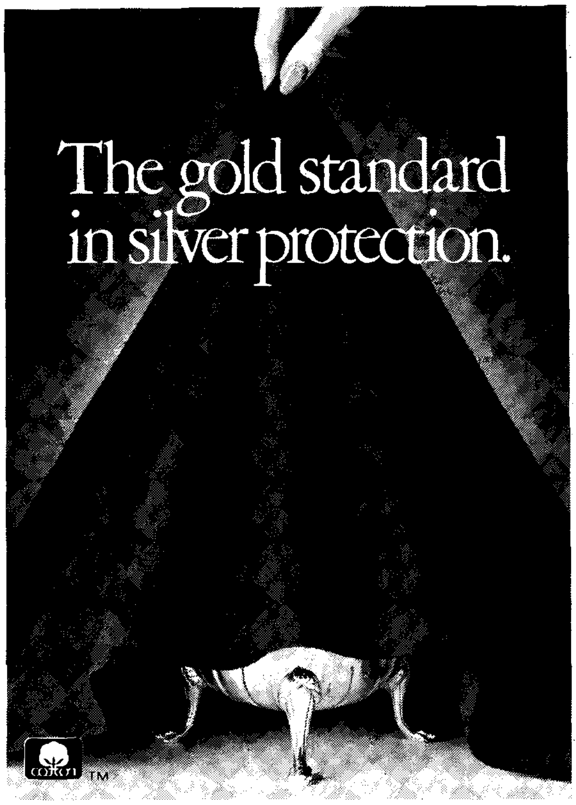

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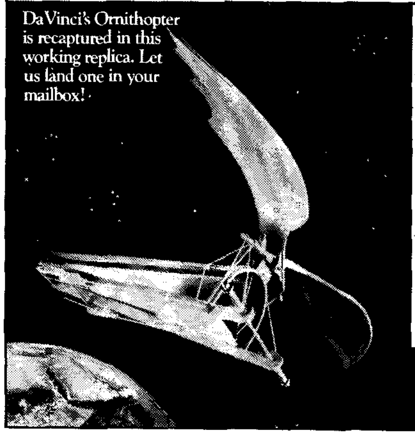
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THE THEATRE

Off Broadway

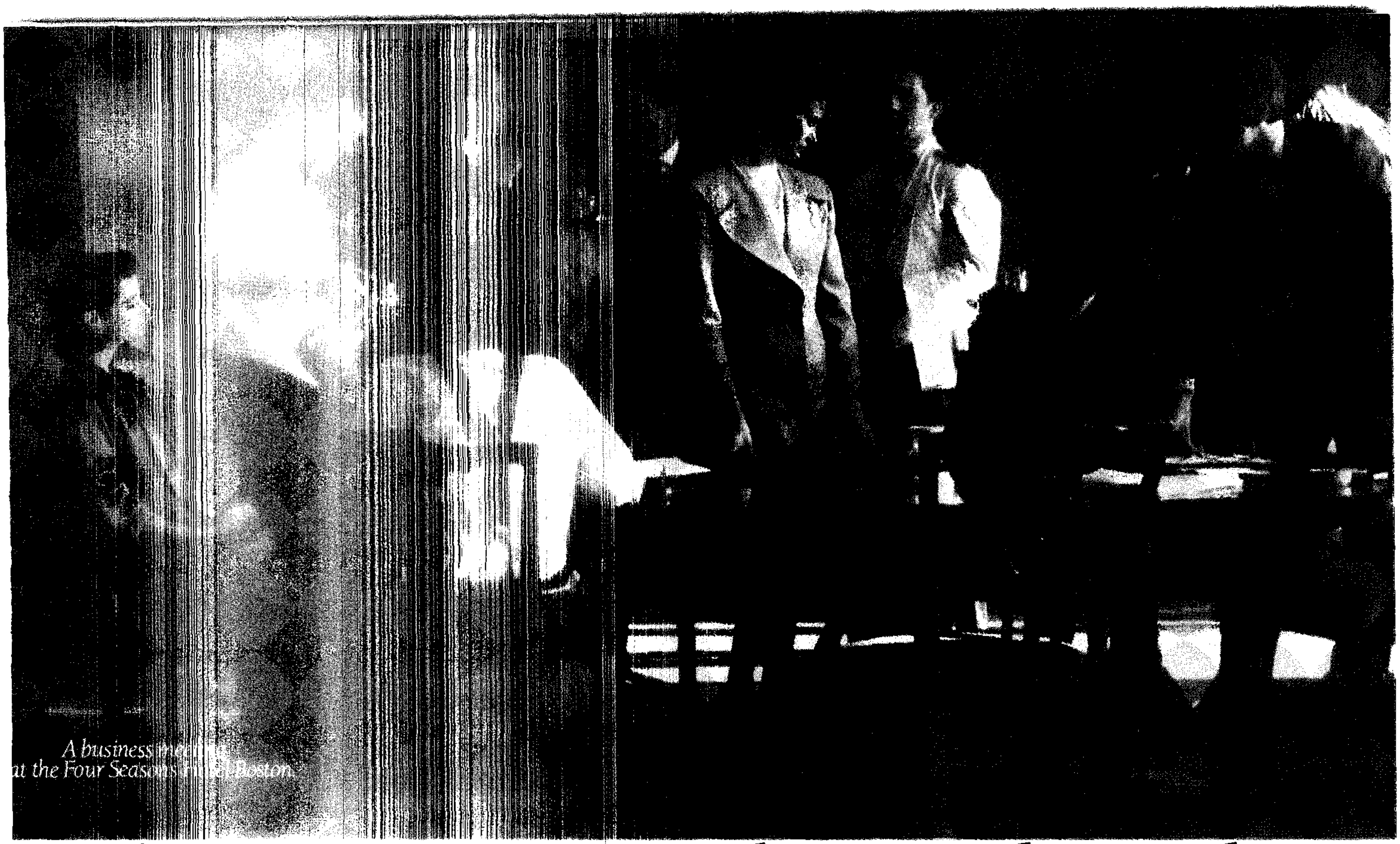
MOST of the action of Leslie Lee's "The War Party," which opened last week at the Negro Ensemble Company's Theatre Four, takes place in a slum in North Philadelphia, in 1978, at the office of an organization called Marching on Poverty, which is planning a demonstration. The organization's leader is a man called Stan, an overbearing former clergyman, who spends much of his time on the road, presumably raising funds, and the rest of his time in the office, denying funds—such as salaries—to the ardent typists and phone answerers. In charge of the office is a decent former college professor named Roosevelt, who spends much of his time protecting and training the workers. Among the several stories making up the plot is that of a young woman called Kathy. The daughter of a white mother and a black father, she comes from Bryn Mawr and, over her mother's protests, takes a job at the office. She is well-to-do, and she looks white, and at first she is not made very welcome by her colleagues. (They soon come around.) She embarks on an affair with Stan, but while he is away on one of his trips she moves in with Roosevelt and falls in love with him. When the time for the demonstration comes, Roosevelt insists that she remain at the office alone, and is sure that he is thereby keeping her safe; he is absolutely wrong. That, as I say, is one of several stories, and the scene shifts from the office to the bedrooms of Stan and Roosevelt, to a hospital, and to Kathy's mother's house in Bryn Mawr. Chronology is broken; the play opens and closes with doomy, Germanic music that could be a dirge. The friction between hypocritical, power-hungry Stan and virtuous Roosevelt grows and grows. A couple of funny street toughs who run in and out, annoying everybody, are pursued, with disastrous results, by a lethal gang. And so forth.

Mr. Lee is an experienced, capable dramatist who has already written two successful plays for the N.E.C.—"The First Breeze of Summer" and "Colored People's Time"—and there is good writing, much too much good writing, in "The War Party." This time, he has overloaded his plate. What an odd complaint to make in these days of threadbare drama! And he does hold our interest from beginning to end, but the short scenes, which come pell-mell, destroy the coherence of the bulging script—or, perhaps, make it more suitable for television or the movies. Many of the scenes are effective, though; the best of them, I think, is one in which Roosevelt and Stan rehearse their group in demonstration marching, giving them a taste of what may lie in store for them. The actors, most of them new to me, do well. Vondie Curtis-Hall, who was so good earlier this year in the revival of "A Raisin in the Sun," is Roosevelt; Adam Wade is wicked Stan; Carla Brothers is Kathy; Kathryn Hunter is a funny college classmate of hers; and they are ably supported by Larry Sharp, Carmen Mathis, and Brian Wesley Thomas, among others. The setting was designed by Charles H. McClennahan and lighted by Shirley Prendergast; the costumes were designed by Judy Dearing. Douglas Turner Ward directed.

"I wouldn't mind seeing somebody like you in my entourage."

EVEN the handsome mounting that the Roundabout has given its revival of "Brownstone" and the excellent cast on hand cannot rescue the show from deadly tedium. This musical—or, more exactly, cantata—was originally done a couple of years ago, at Hudson Guild, and I sort of liked it. No more. It has been extensively revised, though I cannot tell you where. The setting, a very effective one by Loren Sherman, is a brownstone in this city, and the characters are the tenants. They are played by Ben Harney, Rex Smith, Kimberly Farr, Ernestine Jackson, and Liz Callaway. Nothing much happens, except that prospectuses arrive in the mail telling everyone that the house is about to go co-op, and the results are predictable. I must say that I again enjoyed much of the music, by Peter Larson and Josh Rubins, which was well sung by all. It's the words that do the show in. Perhaps the modest production of the little Hudson Guild was more suitable, after all. Andrew Cadiff was the director. Lighting by Richard Nelson and orchestrations by Harold Wheeler. "Brownstone" will play at the Roundabout through December 7th.

—EDITH OLIVER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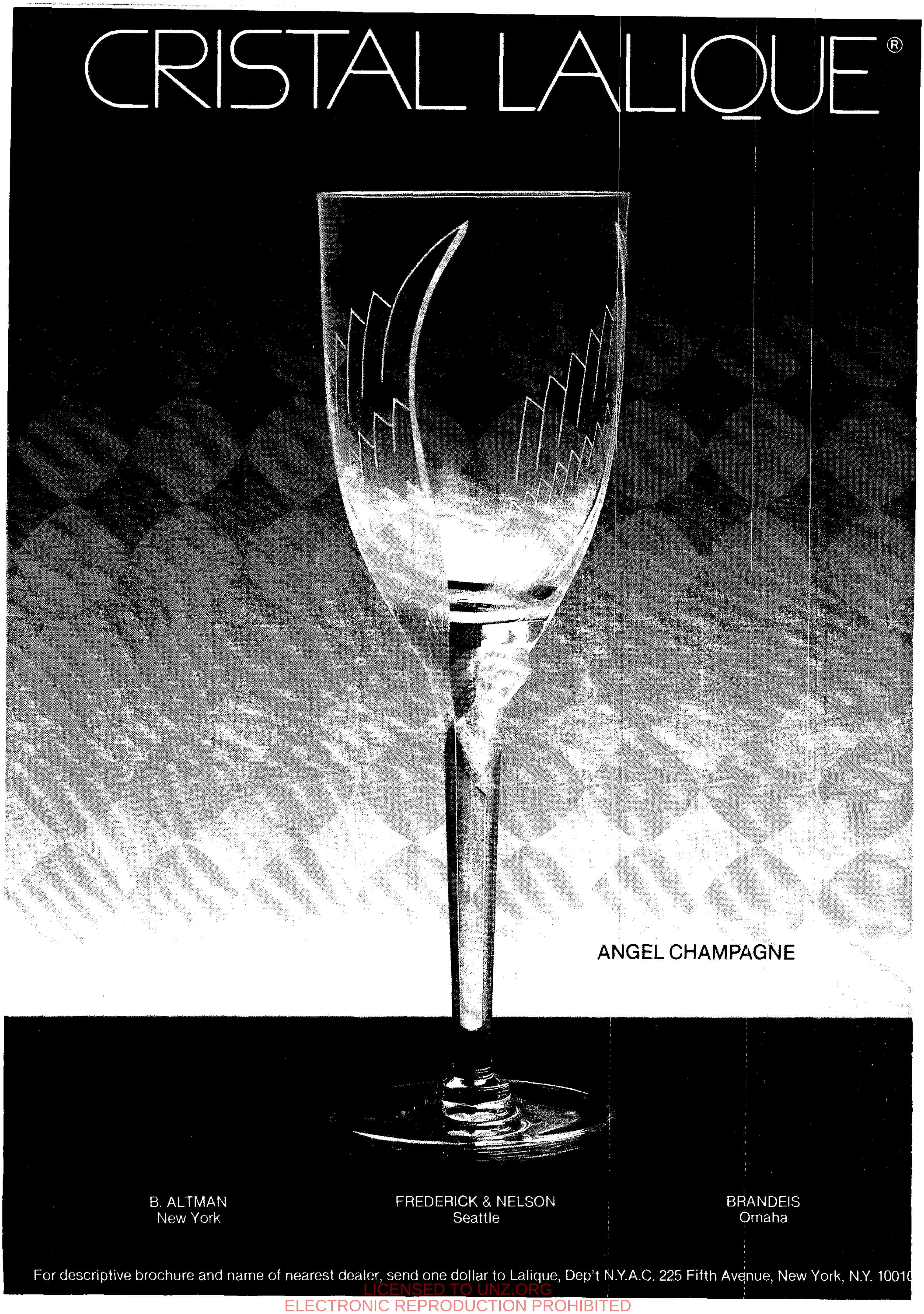

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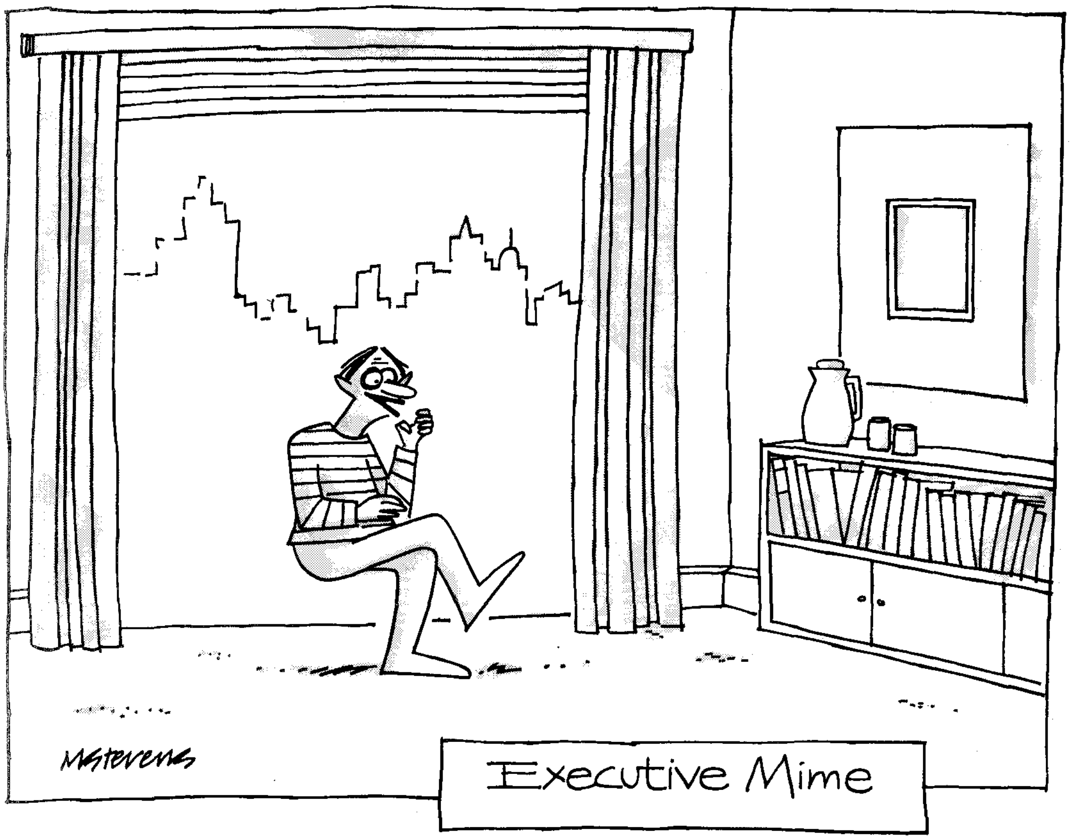
MUSICAL EVENTS

Russian Master

Rimsky-Korsakov composed fifteen operas, between 1868 and 1907—across the span of years from, roughly, "Tristan" and "Don Carlos" to "Jenůfa" and "Salome." He essayed many genres, treated matter epic, historical, supernatural, satirical, and folkloristic. Ostrovsky, Gogol, and Pushkin were among the writers he drew on for subjects. As an editor and completer of scores by Glinka, Dargomizhsky, Borodin, and Mussorgsky, Rimsky-Korsakov acquired a thorough and comprehensive technique. Fluent, diligent, and prolific, he has also been called mechanical, heartless, cold. His best works belie that charge: through them there runs a vein of deep emotion. Trees, lakes, wildflowers, dappled or glittering sunlight, the majestic mysteries of stars, solstices moved him; his music's response to nature is as quick and fresh as Schubert's, Delius's, Elliott Carter's. Bird songs and folk songs delighted him, and stirred him to make songs of his own from the joy they inspired. His fairy tales are at once enchanted narratives, told in brightly colored music, and myths presenting sharp patterns of human behavior. His historical dramas form part of the mystic-romantic vision of past and present as a continuum. "The melodies of ancient Orthodox canticles, are they not of ancient pagan origin?" he wrote in his autobiography. When the sun rises on the last scene of "Christmas Eve," not the Christian festival but the return of the sun gods Kolyada and Ovsen is celebrated. Gerald Abraham, in the New Grove, charges Rimsky-Korsakov with "what might seem a crippling disability: lack of dramatic power, in particular the capacity to create characters in sound," and declares that "Rimsky-Korsakov's operas paradoxically succeed by being, in most cases, deliberately non-dramatic." They don't seem non-dramatic to me.



Executive Mime

Bloomington's production of "Christmas Eve," in 1977, and Boston's of "The Invisible City of Kitezh," three years ago, were welcome exceptions to the general neglect outside Russia of Rimsky-Korsakov's operas—of all but the last of them, "The Golden Cockerel." The Met has done no Rimsky-Korsakov apart from "The Golden Cockerel" since a "Sadko" in 1933. Now the Washington Opera has produced "The Czar's Bride," unstaged in this country for half a century. (In 1936, it was given two performances at the Lewisohn Stadium; there were earlier productions in 1922, at the New Amsterdam Theatre, and in 1929, at the Manhattan Opera House.) "The Czar's Bride" (1899), like "The Maid of Pskov" (1873), is based on a historical drama by Lev Mey. The action is set a year or two later than that of "The Maid of Pskov." Ivan the Terrible was the hero of that opera. In "The Czar's Bride," he makes just one, mute, but very striking appearance: in the guise of a formidable monk, he crosses the stage, and his eye falls on Marfa. (Stanislavsky, in his famous 1926 production, treated the encounter as the central point of the opera.) Marfa (the soprano) is betrothed to Ivan Lykov, or Vanya (the tenor), but desired by Gryaznoy (the baritone), who slips what he believes to be a love potion into Marfa's betrothal cup. In fact, it is a slow poison, substituted for the potion by Lyubasha (the mezzo), Gryaznoy's jealous mistress; to obtain it, she has submitted, shuddering, to the horrid embrace of Bomelius, the Czar's foreign physician. As Marfa and Vanya look forward to their marriage, and Gryaznoy awaits the working of the potion, a boyar enters with the news that Marfa has been chosen to be the Czar's bride. In a striking third-act curtain, the wedding guests fall to their knees before the bewildered, unhappy girl. Act IV is even more eventful. Gryaznoy has killed Vanya. In the Kremlin, the new Czarina is dying. She sings tender words of love to Gryaznoy, who for a rapt moment thinks that the potion has taken effect, then realizes that Marfa, in her delirium, mistakes him for Vanya. Gryaznoy, rising to tragic grandeur, confesses the crime to which passion drove him. Lyubasha confesses *her* crime, and dies, gladly, at Gryaznoy's hand. As the guards lead him away, Marfa calls to him, "Come back tomorrow, Vanya."

It's a good plot. Although in the telling it may seem merely a Russian counterpart of many an Italian

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melodramma, it has particularity of character and incident. The historical details—rowdy oprichniks, dancing servant girls, quaint old betrothal customs—are not only picturesque; they play their part in the drama. Ivan the Terrible's looming presence throws its shadow in the form of the recurrent "Slava" theme, woven into the orchestral web. "The Czar's Bride" is not a drama like "Lucia di Lammermoor" or "Un Ballo in Maschera," whose precise setting in time and place hardly matters; it could not successfully be transferred to Little Italy or to Mexico City. The principal characters—*pace* Mr. Abraham—are strongly drawn. So are several subsidiary personages: Marfa's father, Sobakin, and Gryaznoy's crony Malyuta (two basses); her friend Dunyasha (contralto); Dunyasha's mother, Domna Saburova (soprano). Stanislavsky's production, which is vividly traversed in a long chapter of "Stanislavski on Opera" (Theatre Arts Books), revealed the richness and subtlety of the characterizations. *Izvestia* said of it that it "brushes aside all the old traditions of opera which made it merely a concert in costumes;" it was performed by "sensitive and flexible young people, not vitiated by the old routines of the operatic stage." It had been rehearsed with the thoroughness that on the professional stages of this country perhaps only Peter Sellars insists on; there were seven dress rehearsals before the show opened. The Washington "Czar's Bride," staged by Galina Vishnevskaya (the Marfa of the Bolshoi recording, once available on Melodiya/Angel), was not quite on that level. The general lines of the drama were accurately plotted, but there was a fair amount of operatic routine. The chorus tended to fall into choral-society ranks. The mezzo, Cleopatra Ciurca, the tenor, Vyacheslav Polosov, and some of the others could have profited at times from Stanislavsky's reprimand to a member of his cast:

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The Washington cast—Rumanian mezzo, Ukrainian tenor, Bulgarian baritone, the others American—sang

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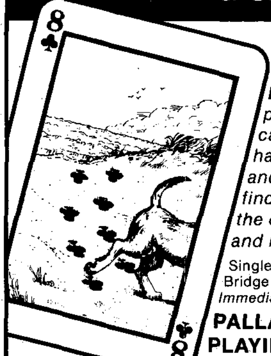

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in Russian. The Washington audience could gain some idea of what the opera was about by dividing its attention between the stage and the projected supertitles. The summary crib was helpful. But literal meaning is not all; the shaping, timing, and emphases given to words by the performers bring the music to life. Words understood, felt, and *used* by a singer can be eloquent even to a listener who does not understand them, for they shape and color the vocal phrases. Whether Elizabeth Knighton, the Marfa, speaks Russian I do not know; she sang as if she did, with sensitive, supple line and unforced tones. She found the physical presence to portray Marfa's simple happiness in the earlier scenes. Her last aria—weighted down by jewel-encrusted robes, a heavy crown, the dying girl seeks escape in memory visions of playing in the garden with Vanya—was moving. Miss Knighton's tone is so pure and steady that some patches of imperfect pitch could not be overlooked, and her makeup was, in the modern manner, too doll-like and bright. But it was an exquisite performance. Miss Ciurca and Mr. Polosov were more conventional. In Lyubasha's unaccompanied song, where Alma Gluck's famous record has taught us to expect gentleness, poignancy, and shine, Miss Ciurca pushed for "richness." Her aim was too often rude power. There was passion in the Act II scena and aria. Ivan Konsulov, the Gryaznoy, has a somewhat rough but not unimpressive baritone. In the first scenes, he was blunt; he seemed to be making moves assigned him by Miss Vishnevskaya, not living a role. But he rose to the last act with some nobility. In a strong cast, Stephen Dupont's Sobakin (a fine young bass convincingly playing an old man, without booming), Howard Bender's Bomelius (keen, exact), and Jeryl Metz's Domna Saburova (shorn of most of her role but graphic in what was left) were outstanding. The male-voice choruses, prepared by Semyon Vekshtein, were ringing.

This was a co-production with the Monte Carlo Opera, where the show was given earlier this year. The costumes, designed by Zack Brown and constructed in Italy, are opulently executed and abundant. Mr. Brown's scenery, built in Italy, is aptly picturesque and traditional. (His stage plans seem to have been influenced by Stanislavsky's.) Perspective was awry at times; the buildings fitted together awkwardly. Joan Sullivan's lighting, gen-

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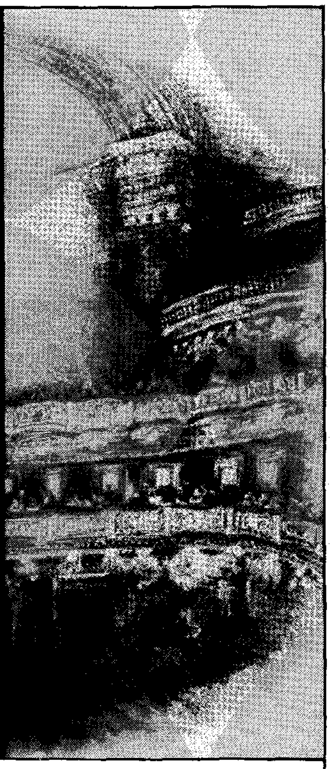

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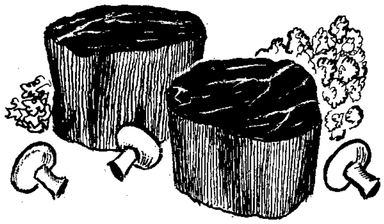

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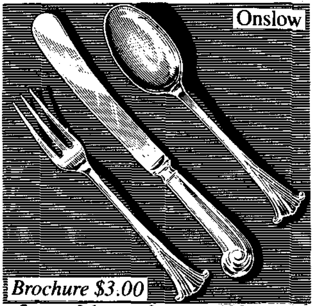

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erally successful, sometimes fell back on blatant follow spots tracking the singers through darkness. Mstislav Rostropovich conducted with his wonted ardor and emotional commitment. The orchestral playing could have been more polished, more delicately balanced, but it did not lack spirit. "The Czar's Bride" is not a long opera (the Bolshoi recording lasts two and a half hours), and the cuts made in the Washington performance (which contained about two hours of music) were unwelcome. A little genre scene was dropped from Act II. In particular, it was cruel to deprive Domna Saburova of her narrative. She bustles in, breathless with excitement, to give an account of the beauty contest for the post of Czar's bride. Two thousand candidates have been reduced to twelve finalists, and she believes her Dunyasha may have been chosen. It's a lively and amusing episode, comparable to Mistress Quickly's narrative in "Falstaff." Critics of the Lewisohn Stadium production singled it out for special praise. And since the action turns on the Czar's choice it is not unimportant to the plot. In Washington, the scene Saburova describes was hastily mimed during the "Slava" prelude to Act III, and this was not effective: the music gave the Czar no time for more than a comically perfunctory glance at each of the beauties lined up for his inspection.

THE Washington Opera has embarked on its longest season ever: seventy-six performances; eight operas, including a new one, Menotti's "Goya," and only two of them—"Il Trovatore" and "Don Pasquale"—repertory pieces. "Il Trovatore," a co-production with the Miami, Dallas, and Chicago companies, opened the season. The sets, designed by Nicola Benois and built in Miami, are pieces of tall, lumpy gray masonry shuffled into various configurations. They grow monotonous, but allow the opera to be played with just one intermission, after Act II. (Paradoxically, this arrangement—four scenes on end in each half—made the opera seem longer.) The performance, directed by Wolf-Dieter Ludwig, was routine-international, with a good deal of loud, lusty, coarse-toned singing from the Azucena, Stefania Toczyska, and the Manrico, Franco Bonisolli. Susan Dunn, one of America's three new Verdi sopranos (the others being Aprile Millo and Carol Vaness), was the Leonora. She displayed a power-

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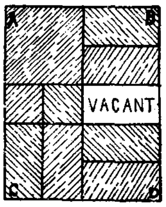

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ful, healthy, well-formed soprano, a large, calm presence, and no temperament. It was good to hear sound so true—unstrained, not artificially darkened, carried confidently through the heights and depths, the smooth stretches and the difficult rapids of the role. It was boring to hear and watch a heroine so placid, one whose composure remained unruffled—never a striking inflection, flash of the eyes, or incisive movement—throughout Leonora's extremes of ecstasy and despair. As the Luna of my performance (the second), Cornelis Opthof "sprang in"—as the Germans put it—for an ill Matteo Manuguerra. He began well, shaping "Il balen" with care, but by the last-act duet was struggling. The men of the chorus, prepared for this work by Randolph Mauldin, were again admirable. The anvils, whacked with great enthusiasm during the second verse of the Anvil Chorus, produced not just clangs but pitched notes clashing with the C-major harmony. Daniel Oren, making his American début, conducted. He "conducts from the shoulders," with big, driving gestures. It was an energetic performance. But often he seemed to be listening to and accompanying his own, inner rendering of the vocal lines, not responding to what these singers were actually doing. Then the ensemble went astray.

When last did a Leonora remain onstage to listen to Manrico's "Di quella pira"? The soft passage of the aria—"Era già figlio prima d'amarti"—is addressed to her; early editions carry the direction "volgendosi a Leonora" at this point. She has lines to sing between the two verses. The stage directions are not detailed, but Verdi's idea, I imagine, was for the curtain to fall on Leonora, alone, gazing with concern after Manrico and his men as they make their sortie. (The corresponding scene in the source play, García Gutiérrez's "El Trovador," ends thus, with some lines for the Leonor.) If Leonora abandons Manrico before the aria, on her cry of "Ah!" after his "Suo figlio!," she inevitably gives the impression of being shocked by the revelation that the man she was on the point of marrying is a gypsy's son. —ANDREW PORTER

•

The short, 62-year-old physicist appeared at a crowded news conference dressed in a gray business suit and an open-necked gray suit. He appeared healthy and fit.—*Boston Globe.*

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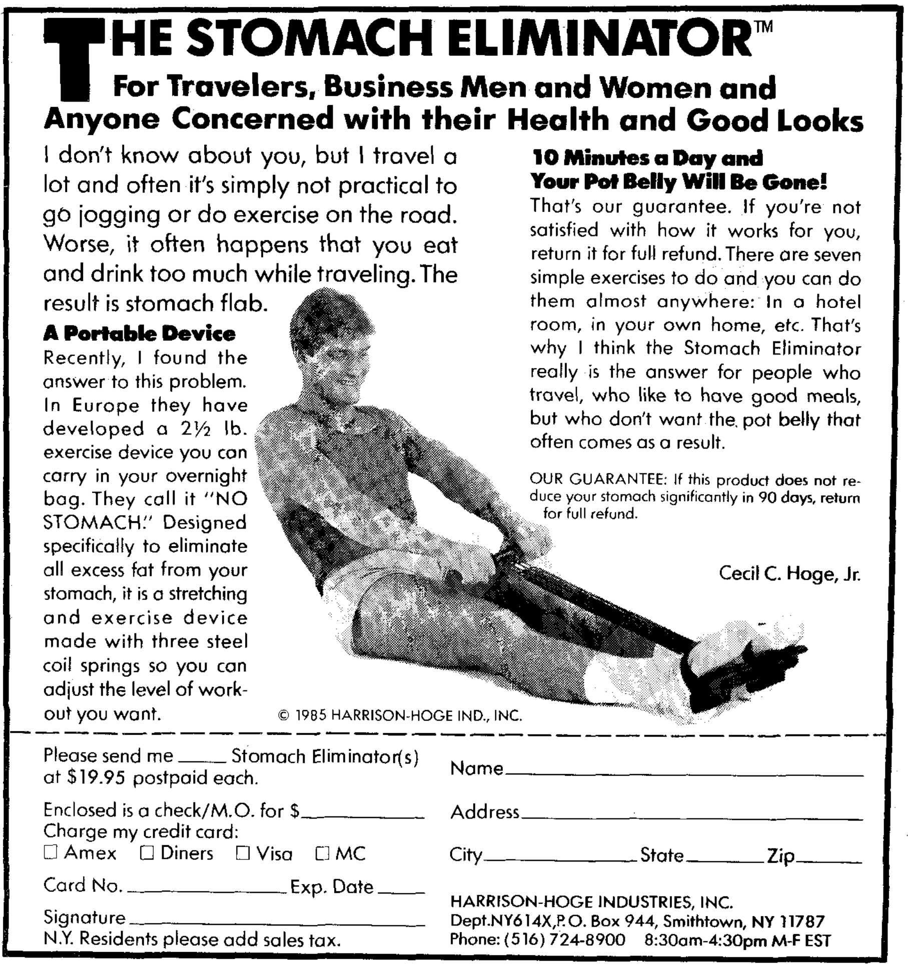
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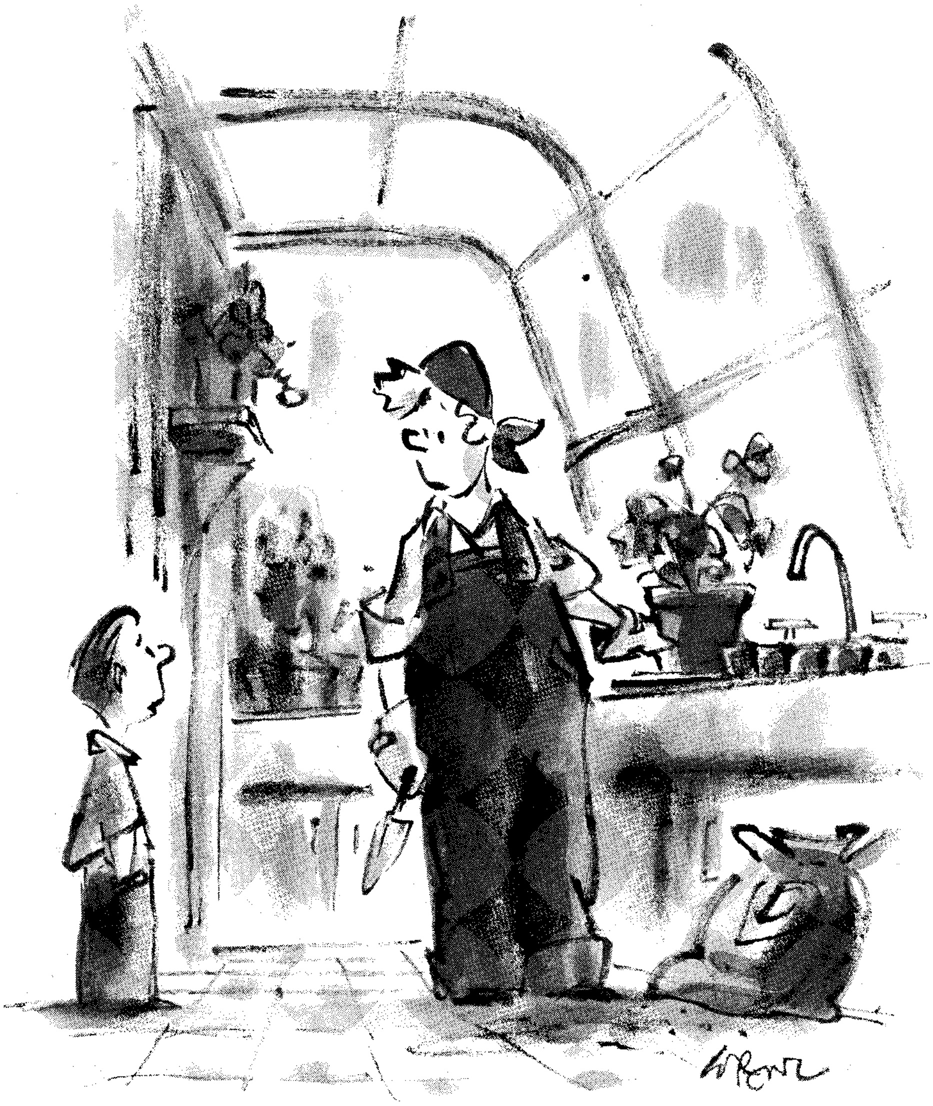
DANCING

Spanish from Spain

"FLAMENCO PURO," the new show at the Mark Hellinger, is just what the title says it is: an entire evening of undiluted flamenco, presented without embellishment or commentary. For the New York audience, whether Hispanic or non-Hispanic, it is an evening of attentive looking and listening. The cast consists of seven dancers (four female, three male), seven singers, and six guitarists, all of whom are Spanish from Spain and many of whom are also Gypsies from Andalusia. To say that their knowledge of flamenco lies deep in the blood is to state a premise implicit in the word *puro*. And these performers do not compromise their art; they shake the dust of Andalusia in our faces. The printed program includes a glossary of song and dance forms which is none too helpful, and the English translations of the song lyrics only intensify their mystery. No matter; the show's staging makes everything accessible. It begins with handclaps and shouts (as in the opening of "The Three-Cornered Hat"), and the curtain rises with the whole company onstage, presenting its principal members one by one in brief solo turns (bulerías). The lights then go down, and the evening's few formal elements are introduced: one singer in a spotlight, followed by one guitarist, followed by three guitarists and three singers. By the time the dancers step out of the shadows, wearing austere gray costumes, the stage has been prepared by ritual incantation for ritual gesture.

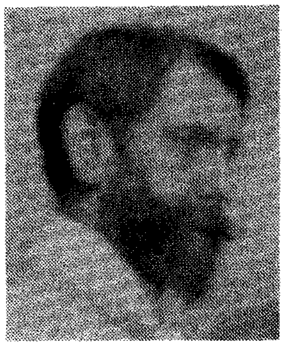


"Will you do me a favor, Mom? When the guys come over, please don't call them 'guys.'"

Flamenco is to Spanish dance what the blues are to American jazz. The blues are incantatory, as Whitney Balliett was saying here the other week: "You can almost chant them." So it is with flamenco; cante jondo, or deep song, is nothing if not soul music. And the distinction Balliett went on to make between blues singing and ballad singing—"The emotions in blues singing are primary, and the emotions in ballad singing are kaleidoscopic"—holds true for the flamenco of the Gypsies and the more objectively developed salon style of Spanish dancing which is featured in other touring companies. The primary emotions of flamenco make it by nature a soloist's art, one that disdains the stylizations and accessories of a more sociably theatrical recitalist tradition. Pure flamenco dancing is done without castanets, without partners (in the sense of a pas de deux), and without formal choreography. It is autobiographical. The dancer is provoked to confession by the music; nothing comes between the dancer and his "song." (In "Flamenco Puro," the proscription extends even to other dancers. Only once, in a fairly cautious number called "Tarantos," do we see two or more dancers moving together.) What happens, of course, is that as the evening goes on this radical concentration of means gives rise to kaleidoscopic impressions. Personalities blossom or contract, backgrounds are filled in, the range of the rhetoric starts to widen, and gradually a vista opens on the whole flamenco tradition: it becomes a metaphor of human fate. At least, that is the possibility which the evening holds out to us. The rewards of flamenco are a gamble. Its passions are spontaneous and dramatic rather than artful and lyrical. It is not meant to be served up in predictable form night after night. I think the producers of "Flamenco Puro" must have had this unpredictability in mind when they designed the program. After a leisurely progression of solos, to which we give the intensest scrutiny, they close with another bulerías, just like the first. But now as the performers step out one by one, we see them in the perspective of their art—we see how their art has transformed them, or else failed to. We see flamenco as a volatile process and art as a catalyst.

The producers, Claudio Segovia and Héctor Orezzoli, are the team who presented "Tango Argentino" last year. Segovia and Orezzoli are a new breed of producer; they may even be unique. They aren't living in the golden age of the art forms they present, and their concern seems to be with preservation—with isolating the essence of the art form's vitality even as the tradition that supports it diminishes and dies. (Their next show, significantly enough, is about the American blues tradition.) The tango was a revelation to American audiences; to Argentines it is a cliché perpetuated by middle-aged addicts. No one pretends that the flamenco clubs of Seville are bursting with talent; as if to prove the point, "Flamenco Puro" contains no outstandingly gifted dancers—no firebrands who ignite the art form and in effect re-create it. But if none of the dancers in the show are noticeably young and daring, none are licentious, either. With great talent there often comes violent change; the danger is that the art form will be re-created in the image of one all-powerful personality. "Flamenco Puro" is flamenco stabilized as much as possible; it is a picture of the forces that preserve the art against predatory star performance on the one hand and touristy reductions on the other. And in its solid, equable way it is exciting.

Manuela Carrasco and Eduardo Serrano would probably be stars in a more theatrically exploitative setting. Here they are the dancers who draw us the farthest into an understanding of the natural elegance of the style. Carrasco is a large, handsome woman with magnificent carriage. Blessed with a strong presence, she employs the widest plastic contrasts and in her footwork makes the biggest sound I have ever heard from a woman flamenco dancer. Though Serrano isn't a small man, his sound is comparatively delicate, and its tonal variety is astonishing. In pure flamenco, men and women dance the same steps, but one is hardly ever aware of the fact, so diversified is the style. The men tend to excel in line, the women, lifting Picasso arms, in plastique. Angelita Vargas and José Cortes are dancers of the same order of accomplishment as Carrasco and Serrano but less even in delivery. One night, Vargas was finely tuned but mousy; another night she was sensationally vivid, while her husband, Cortes, who can crackle with good spirits, was merely precise. Many of the performers in "Flamenco Puro" are related, and most have sobriquets. Cortes is El Biencasao (which means well married). El Farruco is a vigorous older party, evidently legendary, who dances with a hat and cane. His



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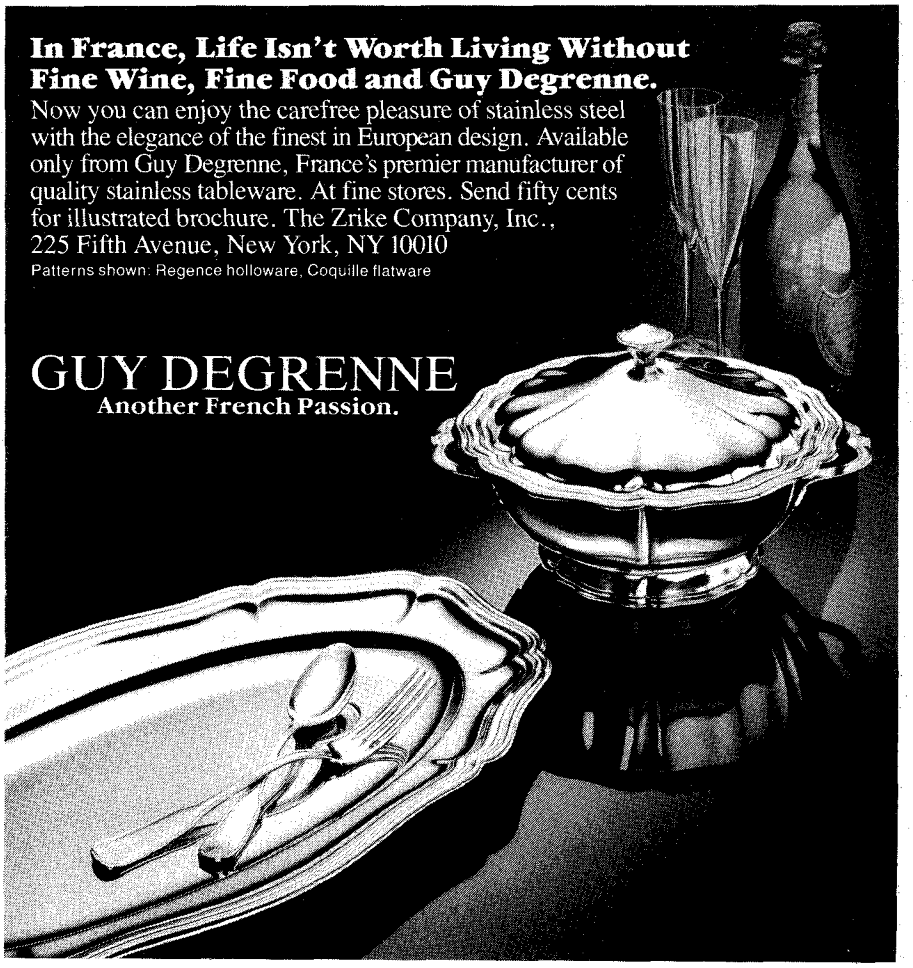

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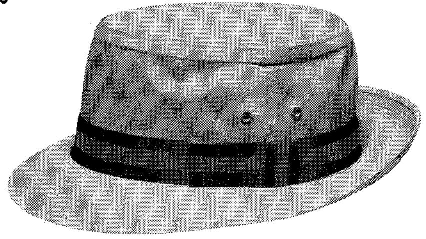

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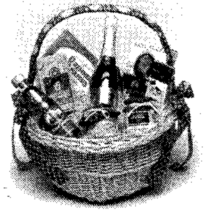

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two daughters, La Farruquita and La Faraona, seem to be the comediennes of the troupe—one sweet, the other salty. The first time I saw the show, all the women let their shawls down under their bottoms and ground away at the audience. The second time, only La Faraona chose to do this, but she was prodigious. (In recital flamenco, needless to say, this isn't done at all.) Moments later, we had the pearly soleares of Serrano (El Guito), which he dances against shadows of himself projected on the backdrop, and this was followed by Carrasco's version, in which, wearing a white gown and beautiful to behold, she seems to burst the skin of the style and dance out of herself, becoming for a moment rawly, even awkwardly sensual.

"Flamenco Puro" is a women's show. As in "Tango Argentino," the musicians are the heartbeat of the performance. All of them are male except the singers Adela Chaqueta and Fernanda de Utrera, and these two flamenco matriarchs all but steal the show. When Fernanda de Utrera sings her soleares, she improvises the lyrics, and you seem to hear each stanza as it pops into her head. She comes on at a point in the evening when our concentration is at its peak. Nothing distracts us from her song, and if as we listen we are struck by the way the sense of it meshes with its sound and with the stress and intricacy of the dancing we have just seen, it may very well be because the flamenco experience is designed in this show to be grasped as an entity. Flamenco does have a systemic consistency; it is one language articulated in sound and spectacle. Segovia and Orezzoli have perceived this, and they've used marvellous stagecraft to bring out the mutually reflecting facets of the form. The simplest things interact—the ruffle on a dress, the rippling of a guitar—and seem to give off meaning. The *idea* of flamenco has never been so clear.

—ARLENE CROCE

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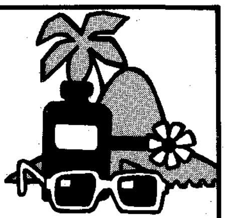

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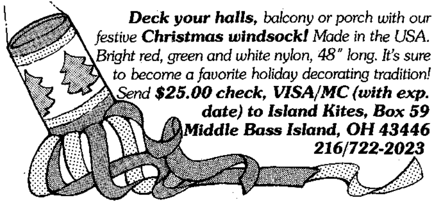

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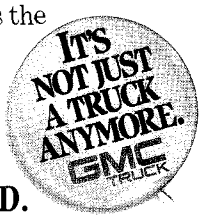

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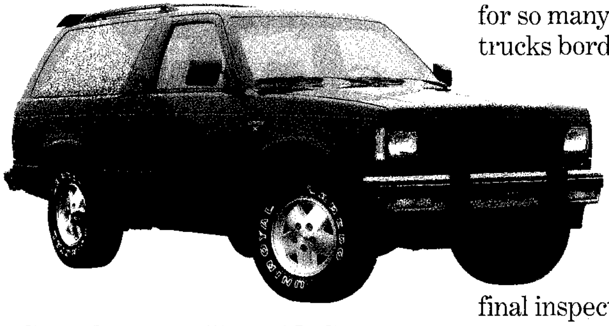

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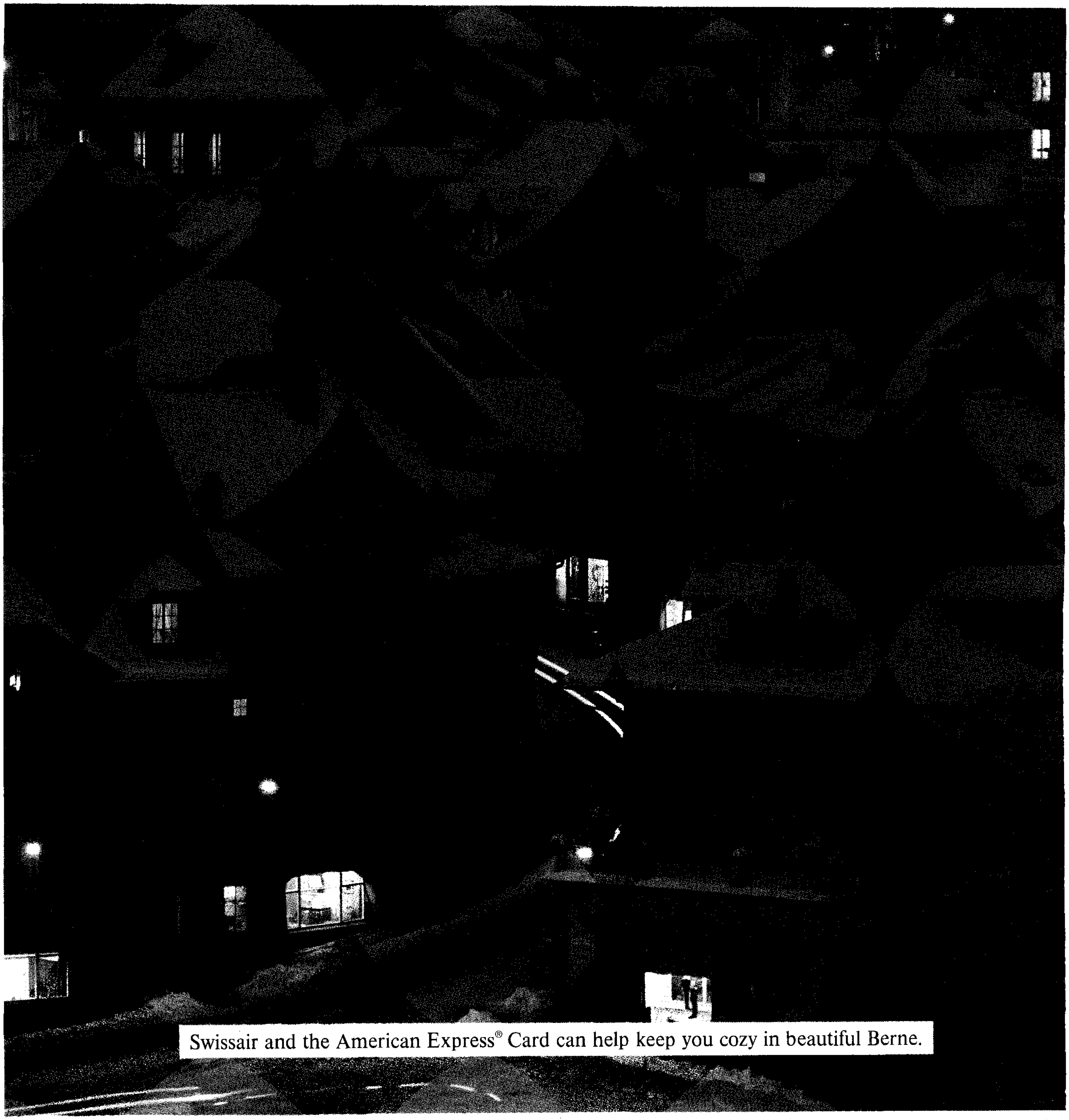

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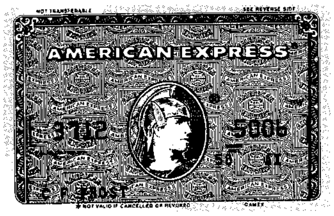

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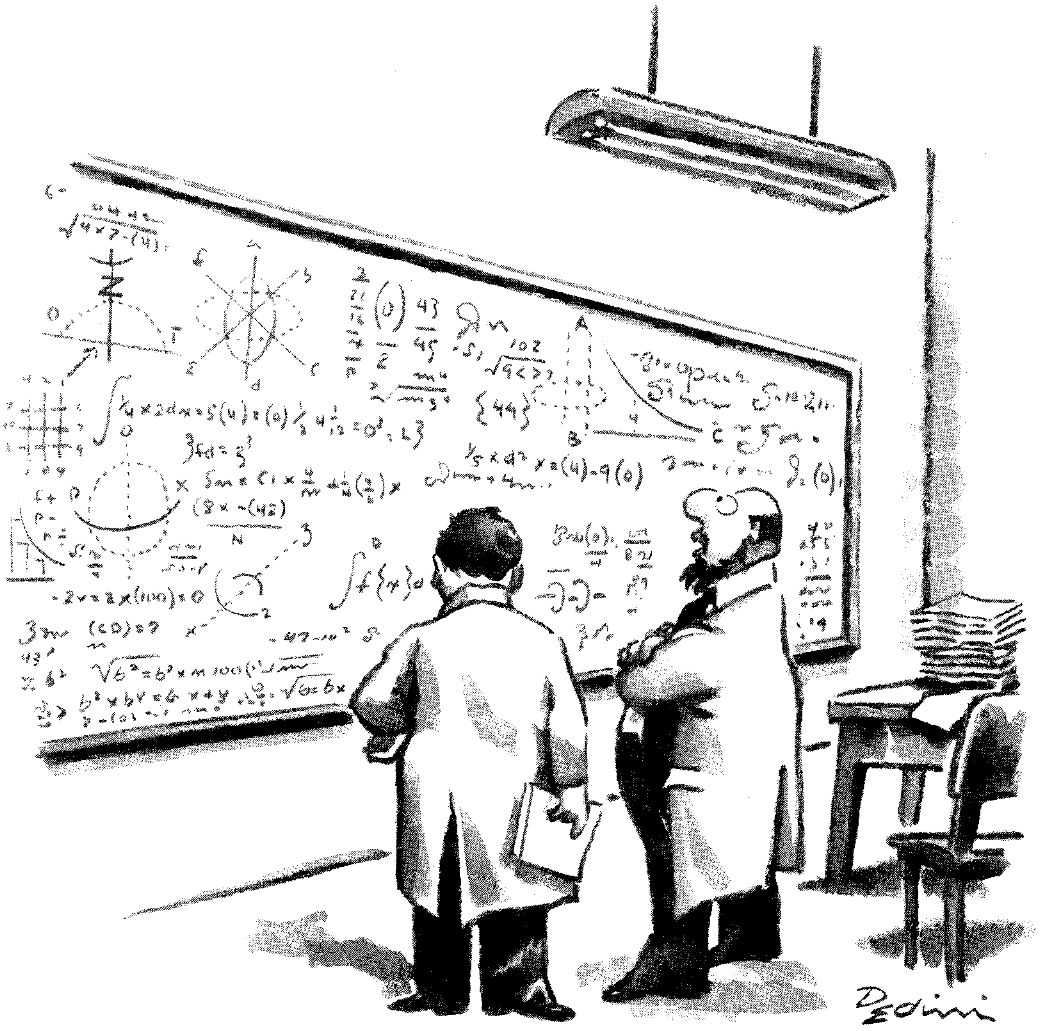
THE CURRENT CINEMA

Doubling Up

FOR seven decades of romantic screwball comedies, sexy, smart, funny women have been waking up heroes who, through fear or shyness or a stuffy educational background, were denying their deepest impulses. The women perform a rescue mission. Sometimes, in earlier eras, they did it in the guise of dumb blondes (like Marie Wilson) or dizzy dames (like Katharine Hepburn in "Bringing Up Baby"), but mostly they were wisecracking broads, like Mae West and Joan Blondell, and Jean Harlow in "Red Dust" and "China Seas," or they were kooks, like Shirley MacLaine, and Barbra Streisand in "The Owl and the Pussycat." The theme of the repressed man being "brought out"—liberated—by the sexy woman is the male fantasy-equivalent of the theme of women's gothic romances, except that it's played for comedy, and that makes a big difference. (For one thing, it spares men's self-esteem: they aren't seen as yearning to be ravished.) Still, it has been worked up in so many movies that it's a familiar genre, and this may limit a viewer's initial interest in Jonathan Demme's "Something Wild." But once you get past the disappointment of "Oh, it's a genre picture" (which can mean predictable and tame) you're likely to be struck by how authentically wild it is. The weekend spree that Lulu (Melanie Griffith, the porno star of "Body Double") and Charlie Driggs (Jeff Daniels, the pith-helmeted explorer of "The Purple Rose of Cairo") go on together takes the fantasy very far. This comedy isn't just about a carefree wacko-rebel heroine and a pompous man; it's about crossing over—about getting high on anarchic, larcenous behavior and then being confronted with ruthless, sadistic criminality. "Something Wild" is really screwball: it breaks conventions and turns into a scary slapstick thriller.

Charlie Driggs, who has just been made vice-president of a Wall Street firm, is gray-suited Yuppiedom incarnate. Lulu, who is done up as a bohemian vamp, in a dark, Louise Brooks haircut, a black dress, and bangles, pounces on him after she sees him pocket his check at a Manhattan luncheonette and stroll to the sidewalk. He gets a sneaky pleasure out of stiffing the restaurant: he's her man. Talking fast, she lectures him about the theft, scares him and teases him, then offers him a ride back to his office and heads in a different direction. When his beeper sounds, she throws it out of the car and tells him to take the afternoon off. Happy and hopped up, she goes into a liquor store, buys four pints of hard stuff, and, while the clerk climbs to the top shelf to get a bottle of Glenlivet for her, casually cleans out the register. Soon Lulu at the wheel and Charlie next to her are swigging down their booze, the music is on triumphantly loud, and before he quite knows what's going on he's in a motel in New Jersey, she has thrown him onto the bed, and he's manacled and chained, with her writhing in s-m gear on top of him. She's like a freakier young Shirley MacLaine; we don't know how far she'll go. But by the time she tells him that he can return to the city by bus—that she's going on to Pennsylvania—we know that he is never going back to his Yuppie life. That's about the first ten minutes, and I won't discuss the plot beyond that point, because part of the fun of the movie is in the surprises it springs. The script—a first by a former N.Y.U. film student, E. Max Frye—is like the working out of a young man's fantasy of the pleasures and punishments of shucking off middle-class behavior patterns.

Melanie Griffith's dark Lulu turns



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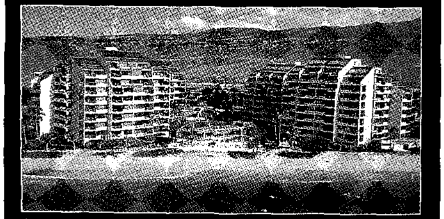

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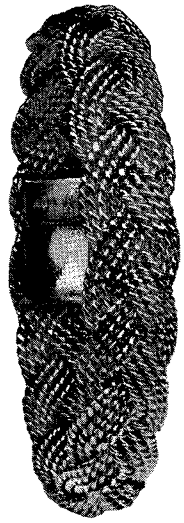
into blond, fresh-faced Audrey, who suggests Kim Novak and, a bit later, Ginger Rogers, but Griffith's tarty, funky humor is hers alone. She has the damnedest voice; it sounds frazzled and banal—a basic mid-American-girl voice—but she gets infinite variations into its flatness. She can make it lyrically flat. That voice keeps you purring with contentment. It can be as blandly American as Jean Seberg's voice was when she spoke French, and Griffith has a bland American prettiness, too. But her delicate head is perched on an intimidatingly strong neck, and she never seems innocent. (Has anybody ever looked better in smeared lipstick?) Her role ranges from confident kook to girl with misgivings to terrified woman, and I thought her amazingly believable—even in the first section, when that dark hair looks as if it could stand up without her. Jeff Daniels' performance isn't as much of a showpiece, but he brings off difficult, almost imperceptible transitions. Charlie begins as a fearful, skunky guy and then is so excited and keyed up and soused that he doesn't take in the warning signals that Audrey sends him; by the time he's in real trouble he's too exhausted to function. Daniels is playing the kind of square that we in the audience are eager to laugh at and dissociate ourselves from. Later, he has to let us understand what was inside Charlie's self-protectiveness—what an unhappy, pathetic fellow he was. And he has to do it without its ever being made explicit—without his ever asking for sympathy. (The middle-class Charlie becomes a real hero: he isn't just liberated—he's also tested.) In a third major role, Ray Liotta makes an impressive film début as Audrey's dangerous old flame Ray, who she thought was safely tucked away in prison. Demme directs the dark and handsome Liotta so that he's threatening yet you can see how appealing he could have been to her. Ray isn't just a villain. He still has the dimply charm of a delinquent who can smile and get by with a lot. He still loves Audrey, and, having lost her, he thinks he was robbed. There are suggestions of underclass anger in his menace; attempting to reclaim her, he feels righteous, justified. But even when you're frightened of Ray you don't hate him; you hate his streak of ruthlessness. Max Frye's script provides the characters with some nifty spins, such as the moment, just after Charlie has met Ray, when Ray compulsively asks a leering, needling ques-



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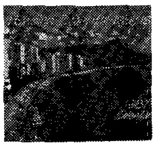

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tion about Audrey's sexuality. Offended, Charlie reproves this psychopath for not behaving like a gentleman. And the psycho backs off.

Demme has a true gift for informality. It shows in the simple efficiency with which he presents these three; it shows even more in the offhandedness with which he fits in dozens of subsidiary characters. And, working with the cinematographer Tak Fujimoto (it's their sixth outing together), Demme somehow enables each of the small characters to emerge as a comic presence. I can't think of any other director who is so instinctively and democratically interested in everybody he shows you. Each time a new face appears, it's looked at with such absorption and delight that you almost think the movie will flit off and tell this person's story. And, though Demme doesn't flit off, his best movies are many people's stories. Some of the people here have sizable roles, like Dana Preu, as Peaches, Audrey's affable, pleasant-faced mother, who lives in a comfy little house in Pennsylvania and plays the spinet. Peaches has a remarkable, weirdly calm scene in her kitchen with Charlie, whom Audrey has introduced as her husband; the mother makes it clear that she isn't taken in—that she knows it's one of Audrey's games. As Dana Preu plays her, Peaches is a gloriously bland cartoon mother of us all, who is such a fount of love that she acquiesces in every folly we can dream up. Margaret Colin is striking as bitchy Irene, so envious of Audrey that she propositions Charlie. And one character in this Pennsylvania town has a shock effect on the audience: when Jack Gilpin's Larry appears and recognizes Charlie—he works in the New York firm that Charlie has risen in—it's a collision of worlds. Larry and his dour pregnant wife, Peggy (Su Tissue), who went to high school with Audrey, are a harmless enough pair; they're cartoons of a more limited nature than Peaches. (Larry is a little turned on when he sees Charlie with hot-tootsie Audrey—he thinks she could be one of the rewards of a vice-presidency.) But this surprise meeting is like something that happens in a bad dream, and we recognize how far we've got into Charlie's fantasy. Larry doesn't destroy it, though; it doesn't collapse until Charlie is in Ray's run-down motel cabin and he hears the ugliness of Ray's tone as he yells at somebody next door, and bangs and stomps on the wall. (Charlie's liberation begins

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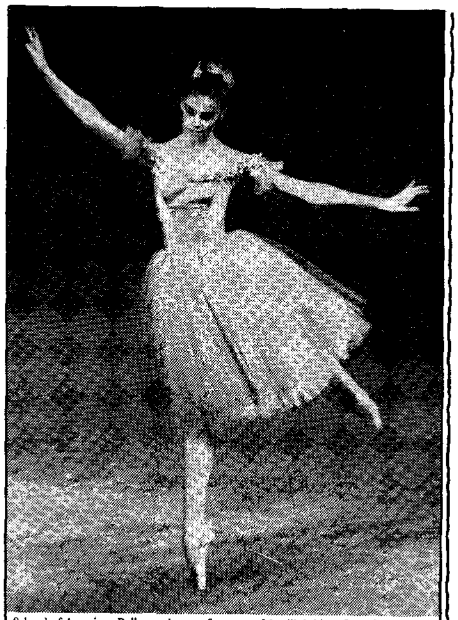

School of American Ballet student performance: Merrill Ashley. Copyright: Martha Swope, 1967.

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with the kook; it isn't completed until he clashes with the psycho.)

Demme's spirit shines through most clearly in the bit parts, which are filled by people from his earlier films (such as Charles Napier, who turns up here as an enraged chef), friends and relatives, his production staff (his co-producer, Kenneth Utt, appears as Dad), other filmmakers (John Sayles as a motorcycle cop, John Waters as a used-car dealer), assorted actors (such as Tracey Walter, climbing up for the Glenlivet), and singers, rappers, musicians—lots of them, many black or Hispanic. The bit players are always there, in service stations and convenience stores and wherever people gather; they're in the background or at the side of the screen, providing a counterpoint to the main action. It's as if Demme were saying, "Sure, it's a genre picture, but there's all this life going on around Lulu and Charlie. *They're part of something.* So is Ray." And as Lulu and Charlie—with rock and reggae booming out—drive from New York to New Jersey and on to Pennsylvania and Virginia, and then head back, you get a feeling of being part of the pop life of the country, and of loving it. You don't forget that Yuppie boredom with bounty coexists with deprivation and with underclass rage at being deprived of booty—how can you, with Ray at your heels? But the movie gives you the feeling you sometimes get when you're driving across the country listening to a terrific new tape, and out in nowhere you pull in to a truck stop and the jukebox is playing the same song. Demme is in harmony with that America and its mixture of cultures.

Starting with David Byrne and Celia Cruz singing Byrne's "Loco De Amor" during the opening credits, and ending with a reprise of Chip Taylor's "Wild Thing" by the reggae singer Sister Carol East, who appears on half of the screen while the final credits roll on the other half, the movie has almost fifty songs (or parts of songs)—several of them performed onscreen by The Feelies. The score was put together by John Cale (who did the track of Demme's first picture, "Caged Heat," in 1974, for Roger Corman); Laurie Anderson worked on this score, too, and it has a life of its own that gives the movie a buzzing vitality. Some years back, and long before Demme made "Stop Making Sense" or his videos, he said, in an interview in the now defunct *Soho News*, that "music was my first love;

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movies came second." He brings them together here in a lighthearted way. It's a little reminiscent of the use of music in "Easy Rider," but it's more of a rap. The singing voices keep talking back to us in the way that they often do from car radios and tape decks, or at noisy parties. I like the doubling up of the energy sources; it turns the film into a satirical joyride. "Something Wild" is a road movie, and car music is primal American pop. How else could we live through the distances we travel? Shallow entertainment helps keep us sane. This kind of music is, in its way, the equivalent of the genre movies that are often just what we want and all we want.

"Something Wild" is rough-edged. It doesn't have the grace of Demme's "Citizens Band" and "Melvin and Howard" or the heightened simplicity of his "Stop Making Sense." It has something else, though—a freedom that takes off from the genre framework. And Demme has used it to weave the stylization of rock videos into the fabric of "Something Wild." Probably no other director could have performed this feat so spontaneously or unself-consciously; the doubling up works integrally for him—it fulfills impulses that were there in Demme right from the start of his career. And he's made something new: a party movie with both a dark and a light side.

—Pauline Kael

•

Carter got up and slapped a passing teammate's hand, the Mets' five-high sign, a herd gesture that is seen as insufferably arrogant round the League.—*Dudley Doust in the London Sunday Times.*

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Coronita residents who wish to fight the annexation are going to have to work quickly and in union. If they sit back and wait for a vocal few to carry the ball on this one, annexation foes will find themselves outnumbered. It is likely Custer faced better odds at the Alamo.—*Editorial in the Corona-Norco (Calif.) Independent.*

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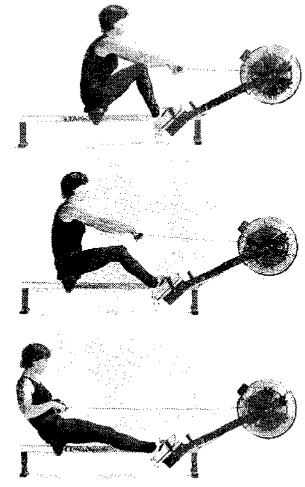

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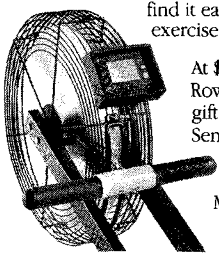

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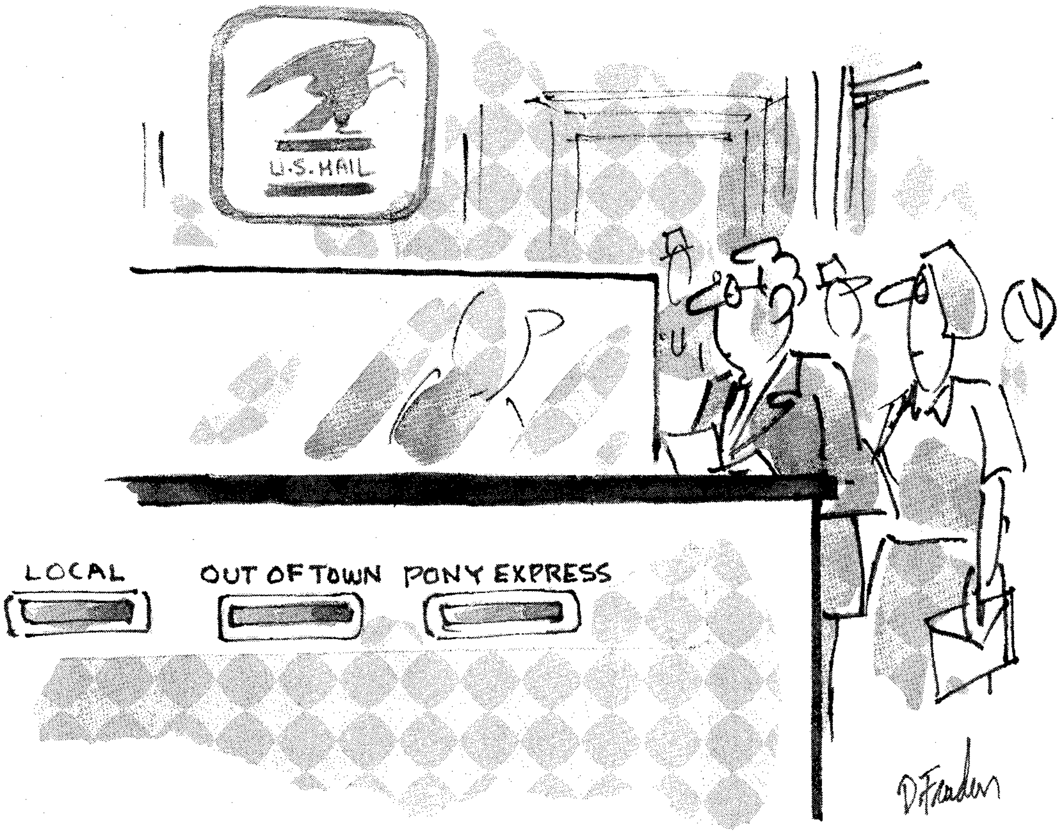
The Heart of Matter

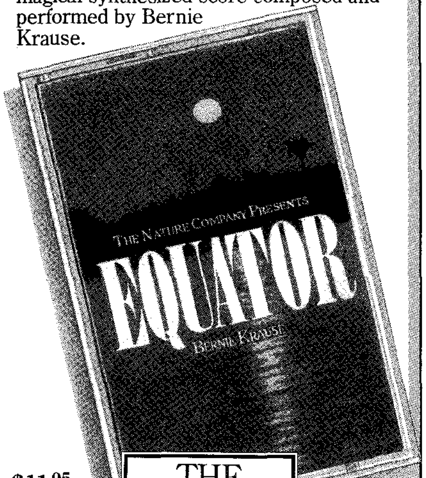
No country, no society I know crystallizes sensuousness as does France. The Provence light; the ring of the cobblestones in the Auvergne; the market smells in the Rue de Buci, in Paris; the tang of flint and dark in the Gigondas grapes on the serrated hills above Avignon play to the senses incomparably. Like no other place, it seems, France lives to one's touch. The commerce between roof texture and air, between poplar and light is palpable. The effect can be sentimentalized and made precious, precisely because it is so pervasive and so difficult to rationalize. But it will not be denied.

Cross from sullen Dover on a sodden morning. Calais is, God knows, no Arcadia—especially after its wartime damage. Yet as the ferry nears, the diffuse light across the dunes and sea flats quickens to vivacity. It mimes, unmistakably, the veiled intensity of Monet's Norman studies. The voices on the quay are instinct with life, with urgency—polemic, slanging, cynical, rhetorical—as English speech tones are not. The shed is dreary enough, but as you leave it, and just to the left, there is a café, open before dawn, from which drift smells and savors of *filtre*, of hot chocolate, of herbal omelettes, of fresh bread (in recent American argot, "bread" meant money, a distortion wherein lies a peculiar ugliness of spirit): smells and savors and inferences of touch—the chill on the little pots of fresh butter in a Rouen bistro—such as no other culture produces. How many varieties of earth and dung odors does Rabelais detail? How many cheeses are catalogued by Zola in his novel about Les Halles, "Le Ventre de Paris"? Just across the river from Bordeaux is Libourne. No metropolis, and the principal hotel is no gastronomic star. But the *carte des vins* runs to more than three hundred labels. Here are growths known to the Romans, stocks tended by the first Cistercians, château-bottled vintages too fragile or from too restricted an acreage to make export beyond the region economic. I know a hamlet in the Franche-Comté, thirty roofs, perhaps, under Courbet's wind-lit skies. When the church bell coughs the hours and offices, the sound blends with that of a small, trout-thronged river—a sound at once soft and turbulent. In the hills of the Franche-Comté, even in the spring and the reluctant summer, the leaf mold, the glebe exude a curious, secretive scent. It is that of game. There are boar tracks not a hundred metres from the keep—once temporary prison for Mirabeau, one of the free spirits and inspired libertines of the Enlightenment—at the center of the village. Time and flesh, history and the life of the senses meet as they do nowhere else I have stood. The local cheese is so pungent as to try friendship; a *vin jaune* goes with it which is cultivated in no other vineyard, anywhere: William Blake's "holiness of the minute particular" of which France, its genius of place, is compacted.

The artists have responded from the very outset. There is a carnal exactitude, a pressure of visual and tactile sensation in the miniatures of the early and medieval French illuminations, in those *très riches heures* (the name itself tells the story) painted for the abbots, princes, royal liege lords of Aquitaine or Burgundy. Candle sheen and darkness, the fabric of cloth and of bone are palpable—are dense to the imagined hand—in La Tour as, perhaps, in no other master. The program of Impressionism is a universalization of the sensory. Compare the Cubist paintings of Picasso with those of Braque, exactly contemporaneous: even in the most abstract and reductive of Braque's experiments, the warmth and weight of the material experience persist. It is, however, in two masters that the singular sensuousness of "the matter of France"—the shaping insistence of sensual perception in French thought—is wholly rendered. The one, of course, is Paul Cézanne; the other, Jean-Siméon Chardin.



Professor Philip Conisbee's "Chardin" (Bucknell; $55) is the most complete monograph on the painter as yet produced. Its approach is scrupulous and self-effacing. (The latter quality is, alas, shared by a good many of the plates.) Chardin's life was uneventful except in its creations. Born in 1699, he seems to have spent his entire life in Paris, save for one visit to Fontainebleau. Though official recognition came only slowly, in the early seventeen-fifties, Chardin worked peacefully



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and with growing success within the highly regulated framework of the Paris ateliers and the Royal Academy, to which he was elected in 1728 as a painter of "animals and fruit." During the closing years of his activity (he died in 1779), the Master was treasurer of the Academy, and his genre pieces and still-lifes were in demand among potentates, diplomats, and the connoisseurs among the French aristocracy. Chardin's reputation, which had been eclipsed by the aesthetics of revolution and romanticism, rose dramatically in the late nineteenth century and is part of the consensus of modern sensibility. It is the ordered tranquillity of Chardin's career that is worth noting. In that *ancien régime*, the officially prescribed relations between a painter and his peers and between an artist and his public could to some be frustrating (Watteau's is a far more complex case) but to others, Chardin foremost among them, be wholly condign. We shall not know again the publicly underwritten inwardness, the sanctioned poise and patience of his métier.

Professor Conisbee places these in their detailed historical and stylistic context. He analyzes the gradual unfolding of Chardin's personal and intimate vision within and against a prevailing context of mythological monumentality. We learn of the apprenticeships to Coypel and Cazes, of Chardin's technical and psychological divergence from academic ideals, and especially from the prevailing treatment—at once antique and baroque—of the human figure in its more heroic stance. Though intensely personal, Chardin's handling of domestic scenes—of the utensils and interiors of the everyday and of discretely moralized motifs—had its sources. Conisbee points to the North European and Flemish tradition of privacy and muted social commentary: in the Le Nain brothers, in the Dutch masters of domesticity. Chardin must have pondered Vermeer's handling of light and fabric. A number of his later portraits hint at the lesson of Rembrandt, albeit normalized and filtered through an eye quintessentially French. Step by step, this study sets out and elucidates the logic of unhurried exploration which led from Chardin's early, satiric animal allegories, through his "little pieces of common life," to the moral subjects of the mid-century and, at the last, to the concentrated economy of the final still-lifes and self-portraits. Chardin's painting, says Professor

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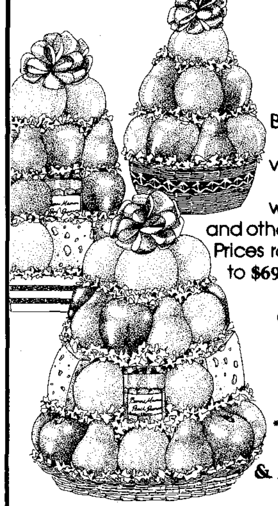

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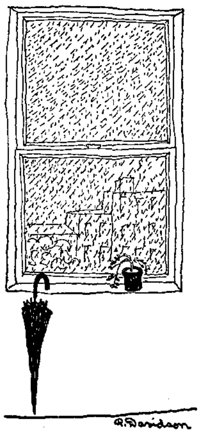
Conisbee, "is invested with intensity, and confers on the lowly nature of its subject-matter a privileged splendour."

Some of the technical means of this splendor can be discerned. Chardin seems to have achieved almost absolute visual, tactile control by his exquisite arrangements of artificial lighting. He worked exclusively from nature and insisted meticulously on the condition of the fruit, flowers, dead game, fish, and kitchen- or tableware placed before him. The impatience of patrons testifies to the extreme slowness of Chardin's practice, to his tenacious insistence that no canvas leave his workshop until it had satisfied his perfectionist demands. These points are detailed in Professor Conisbee's book. But, as he is the first to note, they do not take us very far. Chardin was among the most secret of great masters. He allowed no observer access to work in progress. The uncanny "feel" of linen and fur, of the skin of fruit and the coolness of porcelain in Chardin's masterpieces was ascribed to his use of the thumb rather than the brush. As in the case of Turner, occasional legend surrounded his guarded devices. We simply do not know—or, as Diderot, one of the earliest and finest of his viewers, put it, "this magic defies understanding."

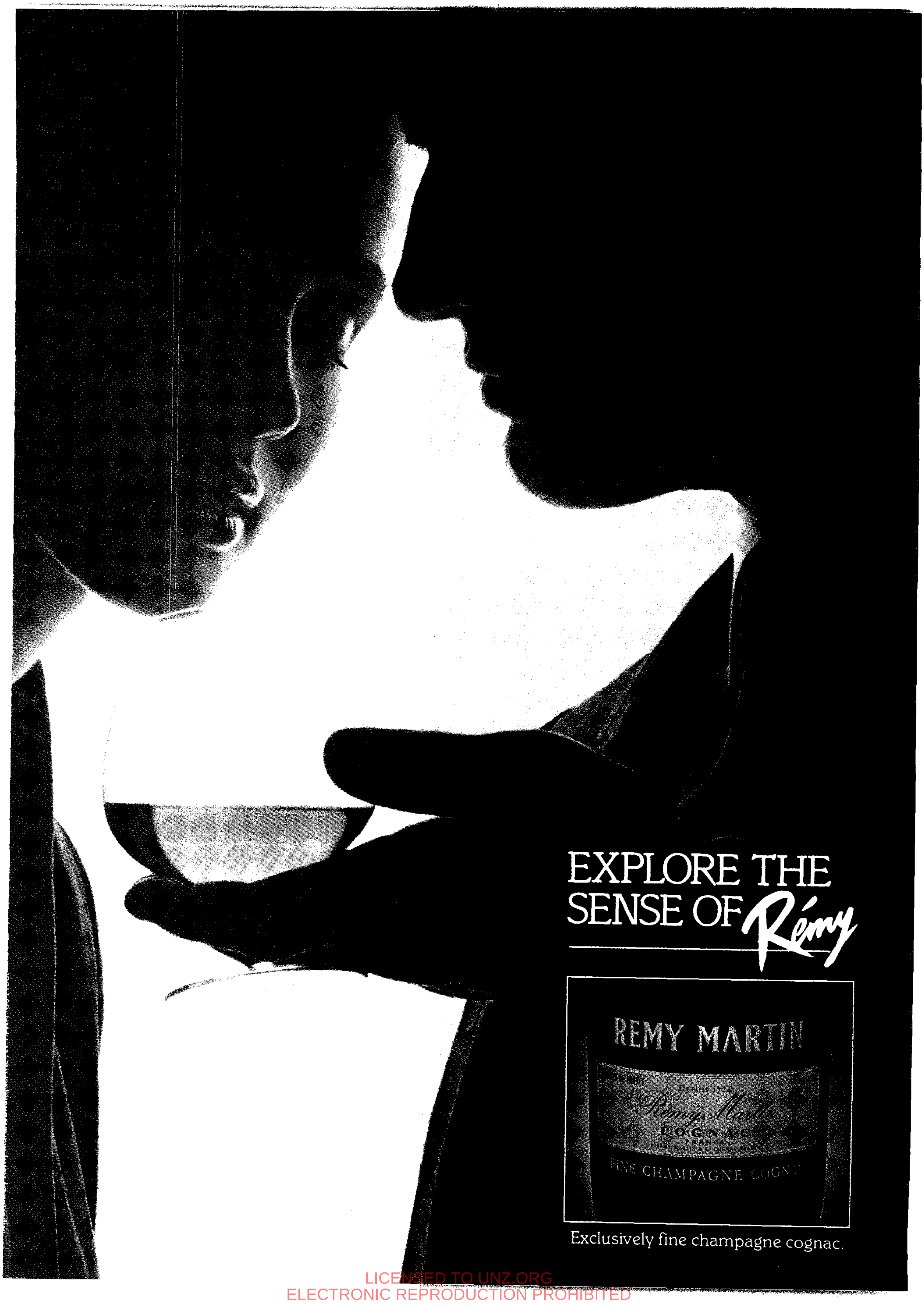


Everyone who cares has, I imagine, his own selection. Mine begins with a quartet of what might be called Mozart portrayals. The first is that of "The Young Draughtsman" (1737), in the Louvre; next come the two miraculous, vaguely allegorical studies of a young boy setting up a house of cards (one in Washington, one at the National Gallery in London). The last, a portrait of the boy playing with a spinning top, also dates from around 1737 and is, again, to be found in the Louvre. Mozart was, of course, as yet almost twenty years unborn. But these four paintings tell us more of the mystery of transfigured childhood—of a child's attempts to modulate a fantastically "heavy," pulsing inner world into some delicate, precarious configuration of reality—than any musicology. The boy in the ornate wig and comely garments, his eyes fixed on the spinning top (symbol of the brief unreason of human existence) but lit with a secret intensity of inner clairvoyance, is Mozart if ever he was. And no other painter, unless it be the early Picasso, has charged child's play, the fluent elegance of a young boy's posture, with so subtle a sadness. Mozart's music is thus charged, and it is as if Chardin had heard it before the fact.

The Chardin who first comes to mind—the painter of bottles, pewter pots, tablecloths, and food—is fully present in the early "A Plate of Oysters" (c. 1726). His genius is manifest in the St. Louis Art Museum's "Carafe, Goblet and Fruit," painted a year or two later. The play of reflections here mocks analysis. The points of light on the dark carafe are set off by the high, strangely warm burnish of the footed silver goblet. This object, in turn, mirrors the muted velvet of the peach or apricot skins. The dabs of light on the cherries in the foreground lead back to the more massive volumes in the background and act as elegant counterpoint to the dun monochrome of the table and the undeclared, shadowy tonality of the humble backdrop. Observe the delicate force of the shadows cast by the peach and the cherrystones.

Professor Conisbee rightly draws attention to the touch of awkwardness in the Art Institute of Chicago's "The White Tablecloth" (c. 1730). Nevertheless, this composition of beiges, grays, and varied whites—with its sombre bin of cooling wines, its great loaf, its fallen glass, and its knife with handle characteristically soliciting our hand—is wholly articulate of Gallicism. It is the archetypal table in the *manoir* kitchen or in the recess of the *auberge* on the small country road. The pieces of sausage precisely offset the hint of the sacramental so sensible in the sheer presentness of the loaf and the weight of the tablecloth itself.

The motif of the reader, of a man or (more rarely) a woman in the act of reading, is perennial in Western art, from medieval illuminations depicting St. Jerome, through Holbein, to van Gogh. Chardin in the so-called "Alchemist," in the Louvre—in fact a stylized portrait of the artist's friend and colleague Joseph Aved—explores this theme in depth. There is a delicate solemnity in the reader's furred garb, in the softly lit amplitude of the folio he is reading. The medals or coins on the reader's table bespeak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both weight—the gravamen of the text, the pressure needed to keep smooth the live pages—and antiquity. They, too, are texts out of time and resistant to oblivion. A true reader literally or mentally annotates, glosses, comments upon the author whose work he is perusing. Hence the quill pen at Aved's elbow. The hourglass tells, traditionally, of the brevity of human existence, of the mystery of evanescence, and of vanity in men's works and days. Here it stands in questioning counterpoint to the great tome. Only sovereign style and thought can countermand the devouring tide of time. Long after the reader's death, the words before him may live. What is most magical in the painting, most singular to Chardin, is the tangible rendition of silence. This effect is achieved partly by the diffuse mellowness of the light, partly by the suggestion of muffling in the heavy curtain and in the rich fabric of the alchemist's garments and hat. (To read an author seriously is to be in the presence of an honored guest, and one is dressed accordingly.) But the key to that conveyance of felt silence remains Chardin's secret. What this painting enacts, incomparably, is the observation made by the French philosopher Malebranche, of the generation prior to Chardin's, that close attention, scrupulous concentration, is the natural piety of the human spirit.

The 1760 "Jar of Olives" (also in the Louvre) inspired one of Diderot's best-known encomiums: "O Chardin! It is not white, red, or black pigment that you mix on your palette: it is the very substance of objects, it is air and light that you take on the tip of your brush and place on the canvas." Diderot and legend have it that Greuze, on entering the Salon and noticing this painting, "looked at it and went out, heaving a deep sigh."

Three of the late still-lifes seem to me among the twenty or so indispensable works in the history of the Western eye and of Western painting. "A Basket of Wild Strawberries" defies paraphrase. The reticulations of texture and intensity between the central cone, with its own impalpable diversities of redness, and the translucent gray-green of the water glass, the pallor of the two ivory carnations, the velvet quality of the single peach are far too complex for analysis. The sum of Cubism is implicit in the interactions between triangle and sphere, between the rotundity of the water glass and the verticals of the table edge,

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themselves dramatized by the foreshortened linearity of the flower stem. The fact that this utter miracle should be in private ownership, and thus inac*cessible to the rest of us, is one of the* very few I know in favor of a Bolshevist coup. The "Glass of Water and a Coffeepot," now at the Carnegie Institute, in Pittsburgh, is no less of a marvel. The white-green of three bulbs of garlic replaces the carnations, and a brown earthenware coffeepot centers the composition in place of the red mound of strawberries. But to say "brown" is altogether misleading. It is the highlighted, shadowed differentiation of browns, from warm russet to the nocturnal, and the roundedness of the pigment, as material to the eye as to the hand, that take one's breath. In both canvases, moreover, the "Frenchness" of things French—those *fraises des bois*, that ennobled garlic—is crucial.

If—an absurdity—I had to limit myself to a single Chardin, it would be the "Basket of Peaches," of 1768, in the Louvre. Only twelve and three quarters by fifteen and a half inches, it encloses the patient genius of a lifetime and comes near to defining the savor of a civilization. Conisbee speaks of its "great and inexplicable power," of those "full-bodied tactile forms and surfaces conjured from the shadowy air." But language is quite helpless in the face of the weight of perception—of understood, mastered, yet scrupulously intact life—in that glass of red wine, in the gnarled texture of the two walnuts, in those half-dozen peaches, and in the black knife handle, almost Chardin's signature, that projects like a question, like an elusive accusation, from the plane of the picture space. Verbal gloss can give no responsible account of what makes this painting at once universal and as French as a *pain chaud* at morning.

It would require more knowledge and aesthetic acumen than I possess to discriminate with precision between these late still-lifes by Chardin and a number of similar compositions by Cézanne. A comparable patience, a comparable tactile authority and local universality inhabit both. In both, light is made silence and silence is lit. Yet there are profound differences. One supposes that a revolution of sensibility has occurred between the two acts of consummate apprehension. There is in Cézanne a consciousness of the nature of representation—a theoretical alertness to what is problematic in mimesis, in the effecting of illusion—absent

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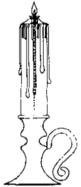

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from Chardin. Cézanne's paintings are about painting, in ways characteristically post-romantic and modern. The slow, subterranean bent toward abstraction insinuates into Cézanne's treatment of natural mass and volume a tension, a subtle instability remote from Chardin. It is, perhaps, in this arguable sense that Chardin's wild strawberries and that basket of peaches bear witness to a pulse of reality, of at-homeness in the world, fully recognizable to us but also lost.

Proust loved and pondered Chardin's art. He often allied it to that of the imagined master, Elstir, in his novel. One of the closing, incomplete pages of the "Recherche," a page that may have been written not long before Proust's death, contains an aside that goes to the heart of Chardin's secret: "*Comme Chardin, on ne peut refaire ce qu'on aime qu'en le renonçant.*" The translation limps: "Like Chardin, one can redo, reproduce, what one loves only in renouncing it."

—George Steiner

BRIEFLY NOTED

FICTION

Jujitsu for Christ, by Jack Butler (August House; $14.95). The era is the nineteen-sixties, and the place is Mississippi. "See, in jujitsu," a young master of the discipline explains to a deacon's wife as he warms up for his first sermon (complete with a brick-breaking) at a local Baptist church, "a man comes at you, and you don't fight, you just grab him how he's coming and help him along with it a little more until he is doing too much of it and he begins to see the error of his ways." It remains to be seen how well the young man's faith in physical coordination will cushion his fall into current and coming events, from the election of John F. Kennedy to the desegregation of Ole Miss. This short and dexterous first novel seems to be a comedy, crowded, as it is, with young dreamers; but Jack Butler gently eases it into a tragedy that is less about the hero than it is about the black family whose kitchen the hero frequently—by showing up at mealtime—integrates. The father's lyrical wisdom is matched by the mother's lyrical despair. "This world ain't for people," she concludes. "It's just goin some blind old where all on its own."

Paradise, by Donald Barthelme (Putnam; $16.95). A fifty-three-year-

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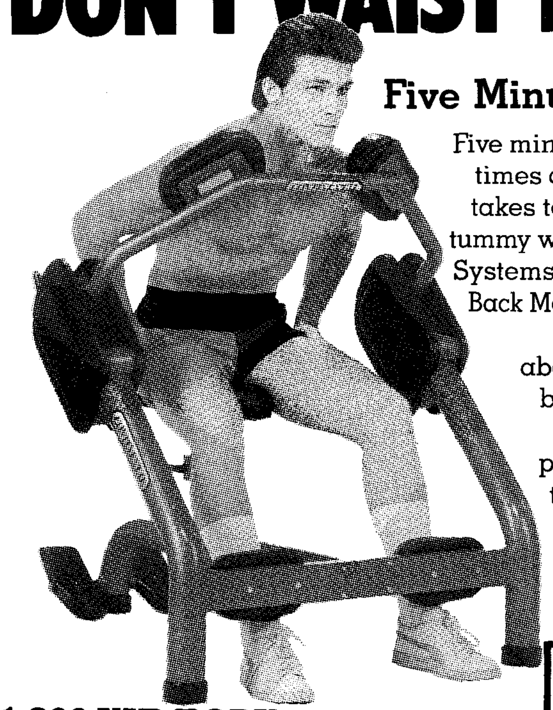

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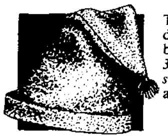

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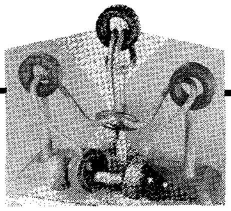

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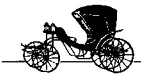

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old architect invites three former models for Frederick's of Hollywood of Denver, each half his age, to share his slightly furnished Manhattan sublet. Eight months later, he is nine pounds lighter, and pictures himself as "a C-141 with the jumpers of the 82nd Airborne lined up at the door." Their jump sends him into a tailspin—his ears ringing with their "See what I'm saying?" and "Catch my drift?"—and lands him in a sort of analysis (rendered here as a Q.-and-A.), which has him picturing "six-foot boll weevils arrayed in silver and gold and with little squirts of Opium behind the ears," and his doctor confessing to coveting his neighbor's leaf blower. Comedians will covet Mr. Barthelme's control, which has nothing to do with caution. There is the architect's mother's recipe for brisket, for instance, which begins "What fool bought brisket?" and ends "Do what your mother tells you." And there is the evening that begins with "Buddenbrooks" and brandished scissors and ends with "buttercups and butterflies and flying buttresses and butts of malmsey."

Prizzi's Family, by Richard Condon (Putnam; $17.95). It is October of 1969, twelve years prior to the setting of "Prizzi's Honor" (1982), and the dawn of the era when hoodlums, drugs, and taxes will evolve *into financiers, controlled substances, and revenue enhancements.* Meanwhile, hoodlums squeal, and Charley Partanna, *sottocapo* and *vindicatore*, at age thirty, of the Prizzi family's Boss, is obliged to zotz them. Meanwhile, too, an evangelist financing a "television tabernacle" franchise misreads the voters of New York City when he assumes that linking the Mafia with New York's Finest will gain him Gracie Mansion. Charley's troubles are compounded by a power-hungry Prizzi who would rather be Mrs. Charley Partanna than Mrs. Mayor, and by a size-sixteen chorine, née Crowell. Duty calls Charley to "the Brooklyn of tomorrow" (his sobriquet for Dallas) and points west. His troubles begin to end a few weeks later, on a transcontinental flight back to Brooklyn.

GENERAL

The Cycles of American History, by Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr. (Houghton Mifflin; $22.95). Some of the fourteen essays in this collec-

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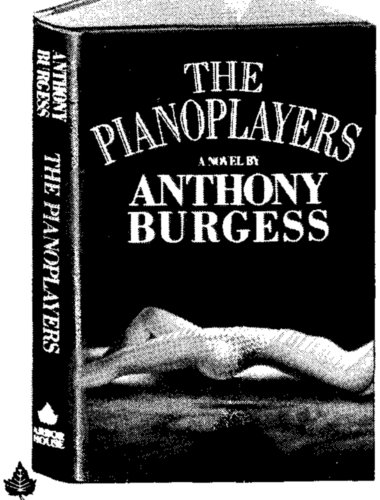
A woman's body is like a keyboard. Unfortunately, men are born tone deaf.



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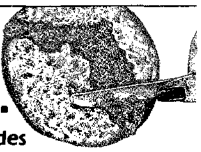

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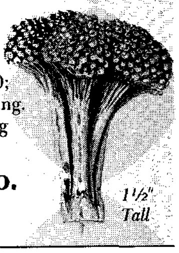

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tion are concerned with research, others with debate, still others with reflection. An instance of the last is "The Cycles of American Politics," which discusses the alternation in our history of periods of reform with periods of consolidation or conservatism. The author presents a number of theoretical explanations for these swings, including efforts to correlate political cycles with business cycles. He does not pretend that any one of these theories is definitive or predictive but sees them, rather, as hints toward understanding political behavior. The essay "America and Empire" is a persuasive argument, mainly against New Left interpreters, about reasons that we have extended our influence, if not our geographical limits, so widely since the Second World War. Mr. Schlesinger reflects on the changing nature of the Presidency and on an assortment of proposals for reform. He opposes some (the six-year Presidential term, the item veto, the abolition of the Electoral College), but he would very much like to shorten the November-to-January interregnum between Administrations.

LONDON UNDER LONDON, by Richard Trench and Ellis Hillman (Salem House; $22.95). A richly illustrated treatise on the vast area of London that lies under the pavement. The book goes back nearly two thousand years, to Roman times, to evoke this unknown city. It tells of the congeries of subterranean springs, rivers, and streams that now flush out the metropolitan detritus but once supplied the inhabitants with "sweet, clear and salubrious" water for drinking; of the building of the first tunnels, one of them under the Thames; and of the men who must spend their working days in darkness and filth to make the city over their heads function. It also describes the development of the Underground, and the vital part its stations played as shelters in the days of the blitz. This book is a curiosity, of particular appeal to those interested in prodigies of engineering, and is very well done.

THE PAPER: THE LIFE AND DEATH OF THE NEW YORK HERALD TRIBUNE, by Richard Kluger (Knopf; $24.95). A solid, vivid biography of one of this country's finest newspapers—a story that stretches over a hundred and thirty-one years. The author, who was the

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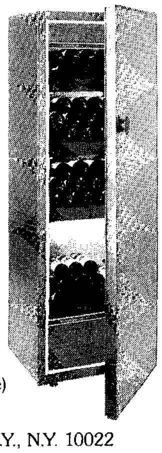

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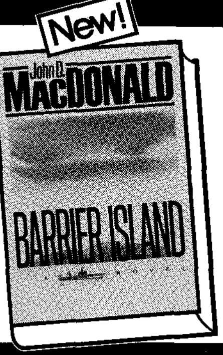

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Tribune's literary editor from 1963 to 1966, allows himself enough elbowroom—eight hundred pages—to give a lively account of the two nineteenth-century dailies, Horace Greeley's *Tribune* and James Gordon Bennett's *Herald*, that merged in the early nineteen-twenties to become the *Herald Tribune;* to detail the workings of the paper as a commercial and journalistic undertaking; and to furnish portrait sketches of the scores of men and women who got the paper out every day. His narrative of the disastrous chain of events, and the human bungling, that brought the newspaper from a peak of excellence to its end in a few short years is a mournful and in some ways shameful tale. Many photographs.

HANNIBAL'S FOOTSTEPS, by Bernard Levin (Crown; $19.95). The English journalist, essayist, and critic tells us that from boyhood he has been fascinated by the great Carthaginian general Hannibal, and that, partly in tribute and partly to appreciate Hannibal's famous crossing of the Alps, he decided to retrace the route on foot. Mr. Levin began a six-week walk at Aigues-Mortes and crossed into Italy at Saint-Véran, an ever-ascending journey that took him through a variety of landscapes. His trek might be considered a stunt, but it gains in seriousness whenever the going is hard and he reminds us that Hannibal led sixty thousand infantrymen, nine thousand horsemen, and a troop of elephants through an unmapped wilderness inhabited by peoples whose friendliness could not be assumed. Hannibal had no supply line and, as Mr. Levin remarks, no way out except ahead. Mr. Levin's own struggles show us, as he intends, why Hannibal still strikes the world's imagination. The author's gaiety and good nature are enchanting; so (with the exception of some ill-tempered remarks about dogs) are his idiosyncratic reflections on a variety of subjects, from modernization and vulgarization to national differences, and correspondences between life and the arts.

THE ESSENTIAL WHOLE EARTH CATALOG, edited by J. Baldwin (Doubleday; $15 paper). The fifth edition of this well-known compendium. The book's sixties-hippie provenance is still visible in entries on Eastern mysticism and alternative life styles, but most of its infor-

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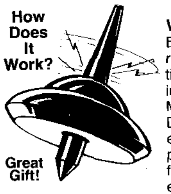
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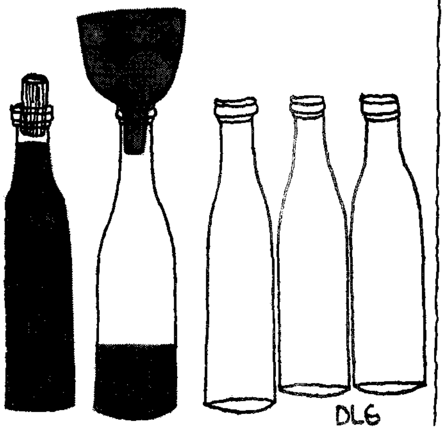
mation is not wholly alien to anyone who has never entertained a culturally subversive thought. The individual listings describe a tool, a process, or (most commonly) a book; often contain a brief recommendation from a staff member or a reader; and almost invariably include an illustration or two. Wedging four or more such items onto each page requires a layout that might charitably be described as gymnastic, and the reproduction, especially of halftone photographs, is often very muddy. Even so, reading only one entry is as difficult as eating only one peanut.

Once Upon a Time: Visions of Old Japan, photographs by Felice Beato and Baron Raimund von Stillfried, text by Pierre Loti, translated from the French by Linda Coverdale, with an introduction by Chantal Edel (Friendly; $40). A haunting collection of photographs of Japan and the Japanese, taken by the Italian Felice Beato, who opened a successful photography studio in Japan in 1863, and by the Austrian Baron von Stillfried, who bought Beato out in 1877 and ran the business until 1883. The pictures, hand-tinted at the time in soft and authentic-looking colors, are portraits of wellborn men and women, samurai, actors, workers, peasants, beggars; studies of everyday life in Tokyo homes and in the streets; and landscapes. There is a truly chilling scene of a mass beheading, but for the most part these are images of calm, dignified, and often poignantly beautiful people. The album shows us late-nineteenth-century Japan caught, as it were, in amber.

Note: "Rising from the Plains," John McPhee's account of a Wyoming geologist and the region in which he grew up, has been published by Farrar, Straus & Giroux



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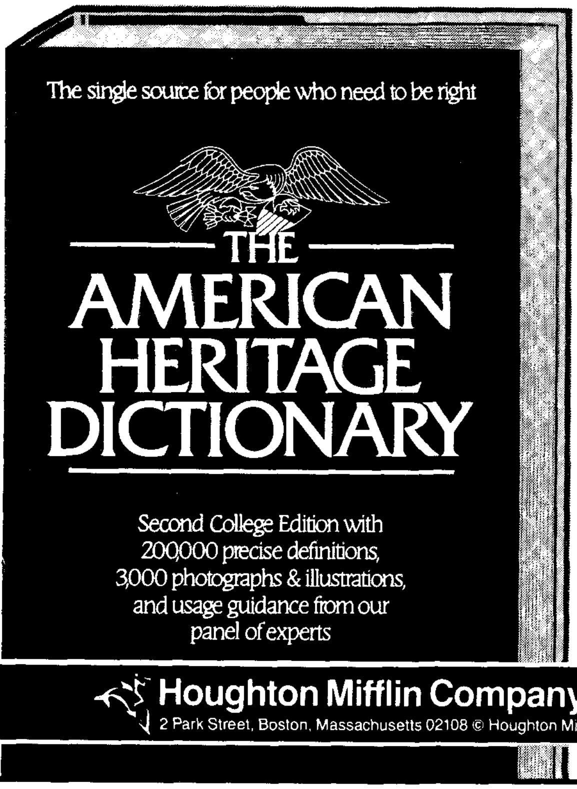
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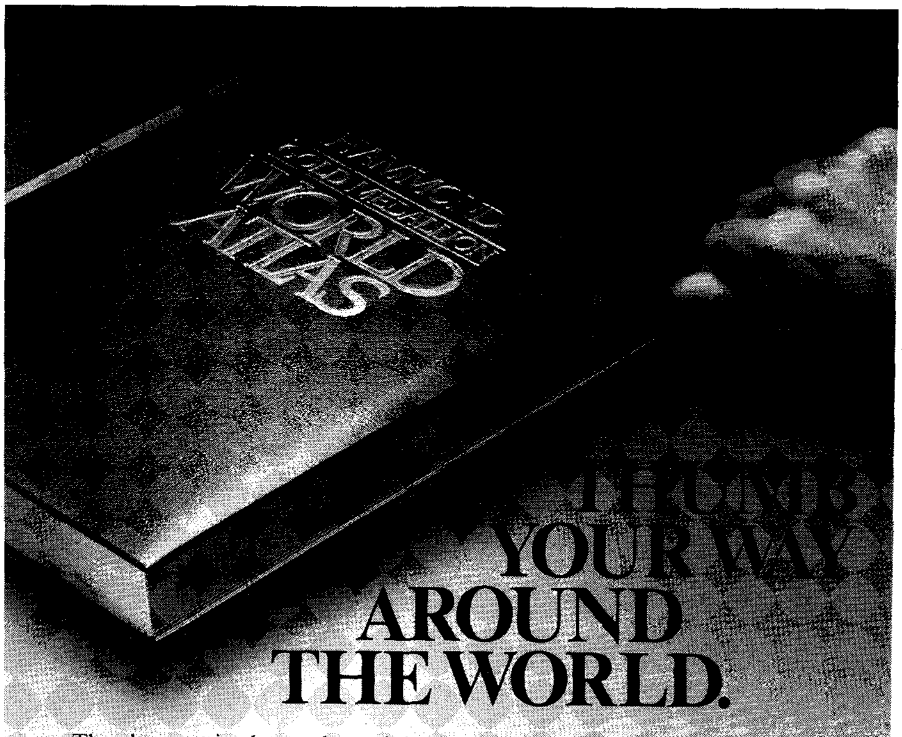
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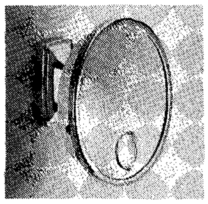

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($15.95). All the contents originally appeared in *The New Yorker*. . . . "Reckless Disregard," Renata Adler's report on the recent libel suits brought against CBS by General William Westmoreland and against *Time* by General Ariel Sharon, has been published by Knopf ($16.95). Nearly all the contents first appeared here.

MYSTERY AND CRIME

SPY WEDNESDAY, by William Hood (Norton; $14.95). A well-placed Russian has defected to the United States. Another, even more highly placed, is still in Russia and needs immediate help to get out alive. Is one, or both, of these a plant? A former member of the Firm is recalled from retirement and dispatched to Vienna to dig out the truth. Mr. Hood has reinvented this not unfamiliar plot and molded it into a novel of unusual distinction. One of its distinctions is the apparent authenticity of its detail: Mr. Hood is a field veteran of the wartime O.S.S. and a Cold War veteran of the C.I.A. Another distinction is the quality of Mr. Hood's writing ("The hole in the back of Istvan's head was smaller than Trosper expected—about twice the size of a poker chip, but less perfectly formed"). He is also full of trade lore. A good agent can often find at the public library the information he wants. The trenchcoat is the perfect garment for an active agent, but Hollywood has turned it into a symbol. Englishmen who care about their shoes polish the insteps as well as the uppers. He is, moreover, something of a Fodor or Michelin. The best breakfast in Vienna is at the Hotel Sacher. The Hotel Eden-Wolff, in Munich, is recommended, and a restaurant called Boettner. So is a Havana cigar called Punch. So is an Italian restaurant in New York called Parma. The name of the Hungarian border town of Sopron is properly pronounced "Shop-ron."

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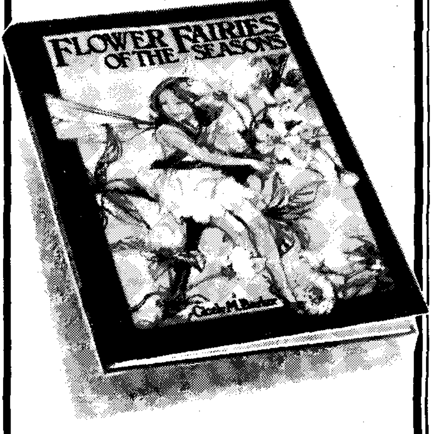

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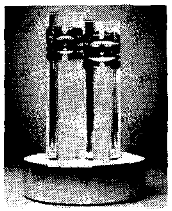

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